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VOLUME I



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THE WORKS
OF
MOLIERE.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

6

A NEW TRANSLATION.



BERWICK;

PRINTED FOR R. TAYLOR,

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A C C O U N T

O F T H E

A U T H O R

MOLIERE, whose true and original name was John Baptist Poquelin, was born at Paris about the year 1620. He was both son and grandson to valets de chambres, tapestry-makers to Lewis XIII. and was designed for the same business, with a view of succeeding his father in that place. But the grandfather being very fond of the boy, and at the same time a great lover of plays, used to take him often with him to the hotel de Bourgogne; which presently roused up Moliere's natural genius and taste for dramatic entertainments, and created in him such a disgust to the trade of tapestry-making, that at last his father consented to let him go, and study under the Jesuits, at the college of Clermont. He finished his studies there in five years time, in which he contracted an intimate friendship with Chapelle, Bernier, and Cyrano. Chapelle, with whom Bernier was an associate in his studies, had the famous Gassendi for his tutor, who willingly admitted Moliere to his lectures, as he afterwards

also did Cyrano. It was here that Moliere deeply drank of that sound philosophy, and stored himself with those great principles of knowledge, which served as a foundation to all his comic productions. When Lewis XIII. went to Narbonne, in the year 1641, his studies were interrupted; for his father, who was grown infirm, not being able to attend the court, Moliere was obliged to go there to supply his place. However, upon his return to Paris, when his father was dead, his passion for the stage, which had induced him first to study, revived more strongly than ever; and if it be true, as some have said, that he studied the law, and was admitted an advocate, he soon yielded to the influence of his stars, which had destined him to be the restorer of comedy in France.

The taste for theatrical performances was almost universal in France, after cardinal de Richelieu had granted a peculiar protection to dramatic poets. Many little societies made it a diversion to act plays in their own houses; in one of which, known by the name of the Illustrious Theatre, Moliere entered himself; and it was then, for some reason or other, that he changed his name of Pocquelin for that of Moliere, which he retained ever after. What became of him from 1648. to 1652 we know not, this interval being the time of the civil wars, which caused disturbances in Paris; but it is probable that he was employed in composing some of those pieces which were afterwards exhibited to the public. La Bejart, an actress of Campagne, waiting, as well as he, for a favourable time to exercise her talent, Moliere was particularly kind to her; and as their interests became mutual, they formed a company together, and went to Lyons in the year 1653, where Moliere produced his first play, called the Blunderer. This drew almost all the spectators from the other com-

pany of comedians which were settled in the town; some of which company joined with Moliere, and followed him into Languedoc, where he offered his services to the prince of Conti, who gladly accepted them. About the latter end of the year 1657, Moliere departed with his company for Grenoble, and continued there during the carnival of 1658. After this he went and settled at Rouen, where he staid all the summer; and having made some journeys to Paris privately, he had the good luck to please the king's brother, who granting him his protection, and making his company his own, introduced him in that quality to the king and queen-mother. That company began to appear before their majesties and the whole court, October the 24th, 1658, upon a stage erected on purpose, in the hall of the guards of the Old Louvre; and were so well approved, that his majesty gave orders for their settlement at Paris. The hall of the Petit Bourbon was granted them, to act by turns with the Italian players. In the year 1663, Moliere obtained a pension of a thousand livres; and in 1665, his company was altogether in his majesty's service. He continued all the remaining part of his life to give new plays, which were very much and very justly applauded: and if we consider the number of works which Moliere composed in about the space of twenty years, while he was himself all the while an actor, and interrupted, as he must be, by perpetual avocations of one kind or other, we must needs admire the quickness, as well as fertility of his genius; and we shall rather be apt to think with Despreaux, "that rhyme came to him," than give credit to some others, who say "he wrote very slowly."

His last comedy was the Hypochondriac; and it was acted for the fourth time on the 17th of February, 1673. Upon this very day Moliere died; and there

was something in the manner of his death very extraordinary. The chief person represented in the Hypochondriac, is a sick man, who, upon a certain occasion, pretends to be dead. Moliere represented that person, and consequently was obliged, in one of his scenes, to act the part of a dead man. Now it has been said by many people, that he expired in that part of the play; and that when he was to make an end of it, in order to discover that it was only a feint, he could neither speak nor get up, being actually dead. The poets took hold of this incident to shew their wit: they handed about a great many small pieces. But of all that were made upon Moliere's death, none were more approved than these four Latin verses:

“ Roscius hic situs est tristi Molierus in urna,

“ Cui genus humanum ludere, ludus erat.

“ Dum ludit mortem, mors indignata jocantem

“ Corripit, & mimum fingere fæva negat.”

“ Here Moliere lies, the Roscius of his age,

“ Whose pleasure, while he liv'd, was to engage

“ With human nature in a comic strife,

“ And personate her actions to the life.

“ But surly death, offended at his play,

“ Would not be jok'd with in so free a way.

“ He, when he mimick'd him, his voice restrain'd,

“ And made him act in earnest what he feign'd.”

This account would probably be sooner credited, as it afforded plentiful matter to the poets for witty conceits and ingenious allusions: else the truth is, that Moliere did not die in such a manner, but had time enough, though very ill, to make an end of his part. During the time of the play, he was so much troubled with a

defluxion upon his lungs, that he had much ado to a~~c~~ his part; however, he did end it, though he was seen to be in great pain; and when the comedy was over, he went home and was got to bed; but his cough increasing violently, a vein broke in his lungs, and he was suffocated with blood in about half an hour after. He died in the fifty-third year of his age, greatly lamented by the king. The archbishop of Paris would not allow his body to be inhumed in consecrated ground: for we must observe, that as Moliere had gained himself many enemies, by ridiculing the folly and knavery of all orders of men, so he had drawn upon himself the resentment of the ecclesiastics in particular, by exposing the hypocrites of their order, and the bigots among the laity, in that inimitable master-piece of art, called the Impostor. They took the advantage of this play, to stir up Paris and the court against its author; and if the king had not interposed between him and harm, he had then fallen a sacrifice to the fury and indignation of the clergy. The king stood his friend now he was dead, and being informed of the archbishop's prohibition, sent for and expostulated with him; but he was an obstinate churchman, and would not willingly condescend to his majesty's persuasions. The king, finding him unwilling to comply, desired to know how many feet deep the Holy Ground reached? The bishop replied, About eight. Well, said the king, I find there is no getting the better of your scruples; therefore let his grave be dug twelve feet, that is four below your consecrated ground, and let them bury him there. He was accordingly interred at St. Joseph's, which was a chapel of ease to the parish church at St. Eustace. . . .

A celebrated actress has given us the following portrait of Moliere. "He was neither very fat nor very lean; of a figure rather large than small; a noble

“mien, and a handsome leg; he walked majestically, “had a serious air, a large nose, wide mouth, with “thick lips; of a brown complexion, with eye-brows “black and large; and the different motions he gave “them, rendered his countenance extremely comic. “With regard to his character, he was good-tempered, “affable, and generous. He was very fond of ma- “king speeches; and when he read his pieces to the “players, he desired them to bring their children along “with them to hear him, in order to draw some con- “jectures from the natural movements they discover- “ed.”

It was customary with the men of genius and learning in the time of Lewis XIV. to form themselves into a society, and oftner than once in a week, they had a common supper; where the pleasures of the table were the least part of the entertainment, and where the conversation, we doubt not, was far more worthy to be recorded, than that of the seven wise Greeks, related by Plutarch; or the table-talk of the holy Luther.

Moliere, one of the most gay of this learned company, was frequently their host; especially at a villa he had on the borders of the Seine, near Paris: his worthy guests were too good judges of pleasure, to suffer intoxication to usurp the seat of wit and learning; though Bacchus was frequently admitted to enliven the spirits of the Muses.

It happened however one evening, at Moliere's country-house, that the host being quite fatigued, could no longer keep his post, but left it to Chapelle, one of the company, and retired early to bed. Chapelle, in order to increase the spirits of his company, pushed the champaign briskly round, and intoxication stole in, unthought of. They began to talk of morality, and consequently of the futility of the pleasures of this world,

and they came at last to this conclusion: That the great object of human life should be, by some renowned action, to acquire immortal fame. From this one of the company took occasion to say: "Gentlemen, this being the case, since life is so worthless, and fame so desirable, what can be more eligible, what more noble or more glorious, than by shaking off this load of life, to acquire eternal renown? My advice therefore is, that we should all go together to the river, and there plunge in; and by thus dying in that unity with which we have lived, our names and our friendship will be celebrated by all posterity." The vapours of the wine had so far heated their imaginations, and clouded their judgments, that this proposition, extravagant as it was, appeared highly rational. They prepared therefore, with great solemnity, to advance to the Seine, and there offer this sacrifice to fame.

A poor old servant, who however was sober, understanding their design, ran in and awaked his master: Moliere presently appeared among them; was immediately acquainted with their intention, and invited to partake of their immortal fame. He thought it not prudent, directly, to oppose their project, but said: "My dear friends, I approve your design extremely, and am very ready to partake of so glorious a death, but by no means now; for posterity may insinuate, by its being performed at so late an hour, that it was not the effect of philosophy, but inebriety, and so important an action should be free even from a possibility of reflection: my advice therefore is, that every one repair to his bed, and that we assemble early in the morning, and then with that coolness and serenity, which is becoming of philosophers, carry this noble design into execution." This improvement in their scheme met with universal approbation, and eve-

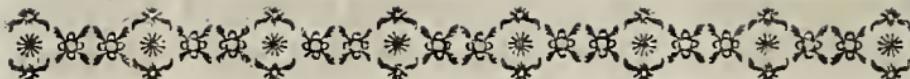
zy one, except Moliere, retired contentedly to bed: and no doubt the next morning shuddered at that rashness which a few hours before had appeared so prudential; and at the irreparable injury which they had well nigh done to the republic of learning.

As Moliere was returning one day from his country-house to Paris, accompanied by Charpentier, a celebrated composer of music, he gave an alms to a poor man, who immediately after stopt the coach, saying, "I believe, Sir, you had no design of giving me a piece of gold." "See where virtue goes to build her nest," cried Moliere, and after a moment's reflexion, "Hold, friend," says he, "there is another for you."

Many are of opinion, that Moliere's plays exceed, or equal, the noblest performances of that kind in ancient Greece and Rome. "He was," says Voltaire, "the best comic poet that ever lived in any nation. And it must be confessed, that if we compare the art and regularity of our theatre with the irregular scenes of the ancients, their weak intrigues, the strange practice of declaring by actors, in cold and unnatural monodies, what they had done, and what they would do; it must be confessed, I say, that Moliere retrieved comedy out of chaos, as Corneille had tragedy, and that the French have been superior in this respect to all the people upon earth." We will leave the critics to dispute the point with this Frenchman, if they shall think it worth their while. We are told by M. Boileau, that Moliere used to read all his comedies to an old woman who was his housekeeper, as she sat with him at her work by the chimney-corner, and could foretel the success of his play in the theatre, from the reception it met at his fire-side: for the audience always followed the old woman, and never failed to laugh in the same place.

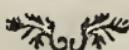
We shall conclude our account with observing, that this excellent comedian, however blessed in other respects, was particularly unhappy in a wife. He has succeeded extremely well in describing the jars of married people, and the uneasiness of jealous husbands; and it is no wonder he has; for it is said, that he knew it by experience, as well as any man in the world. His wife was the daughter of Mrs. La Bejart above-mentioned, and was born, when her mother was with him at Languedoc. Moliere married her some time after he had settled his company at Paris; notwithstanding which, some have suspected that he was her father. Be that as it will, he was extremely jealous of her, and it is agreed on all hands, that he had reason to be so.





The BLUNDERER, or the COUNTER-PLOTS, a Comedy of Five Acts, performed at Paris, at the Theatre of the Little Bourbon, December 3. 1658.

THE following comedy was performed in December 1658. We were then unacquainted with every kind of comedy but that full of intrigue; the art of exposing characters and manners upon the stage was reserved for Moliere. Although he has only given us a sketch of it in the comedy of the BLUNDERER, yet this piece is not unworthy of its author. It is partly in the ancient manner, the plot being carried on by a servant; and partly in the Spanish taste, by the multiplicity of incidents which spring up one after another, without one necessarily arising from another. There are some but indifferent characters in it, and scenes but ill connected; there is no great versimilitude in the character of Lelius, and the unravelling is not very happy. The number of the acts is determined to five only in compliance with the common custom, which restrains the longest pieces to this number; but these defects are covered by a variety and vivacity, which takes up the spectator's attention, and keeps him from reflecting too much upon what might offend him.



T H E

B L U N D E R E R:

OR, THE

C O U N T E R - P L O T S.

A

C O M E D Y.

V O L. I.

A

A C T O R S.

PANDOLPH, Father to Lelius.

ANSELM, Father to Hippolyta.

TRUFALDIN, an old Gentleman.

CELIA, Slave to Trufaldin.

HIPPOLYTA, Daughter to Anselm.

LELIUS, Son to Pandolph.

LEANDER, a young Gentleman of Rank.

ANDER, supposed a Gypsy.

MASCARIL, Servant to Lelius.

ERGASTUS, Friend to Mascaril.

A Messenger.

Two Companies in Mascarilade.

S C E N E, *in a public place at Messina.*



T H E
BLUNDERER:
OR, THE
COUNTER-PLOTS.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

LELIUS.

ELL, well, Leander, I am sorry it must
come to a dispute between us; but as
it is so, let us try our skill, to see which
can supplant his rival. Be upon your
guard, and exert yourself, for be assured, every
scheme shall be used to carry off this miracle of
beauty..

S C E N E II.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

AH! my friend Mascaril..

MASCARIL. What is the matter?

LELIUS. Matter enough——every thing seems to thwart my designs: cruel destiny has made Leander in love with Celia, and, notwithstanding I have changed the object of my passion, he continues still to be my rival.

MASCARIL. Leander in love with Celia!

LELIUS. I tell thee, to distraction.

MASCARIL. So much the worse.

LELIUS. I must confess it is for the worse; and this is what confounds me; but, however, I have no reason to despair, as I have so good a friend as you; I am certain that thy ready wit and fertile invention will extricate me from all those difficulties: for thou art the king of valets; thou hast not thy fellow in the world.

MASCARIL. Fewer of your compliments, I beg, good Sir: this is always the case when we poor devils are wanted to serve a turn; then we are the honestest, cleverest and wittiest fellows in the world: but at another time, we are the damnedest, foolish rascals in the world, fit for nothing, and deserve to be kicked out of doors.

LELIUS. Nay, you accuse me wrongfully now. But to the matter in hand; let us talk of the beautiful captive. The hardest heart cannot withstand such charms: I am fully persuaded that she is of noble extraction; her person and conversation is such, that heaven conceals her under this disguise for some particular reason.

MASCARIL. A pretty romantic story indeed! But, pray, Sir, let me know what Mr. Pandolph, who styles himself your father, will think of all these fine affairs? You must be sensible how soon he is

enraged when your behaviour is not agreeable to his sentiments; and as he supposes that nothing but matrimony will make you wiser, and is now treating with Anselm about your marriage with his daughter Hippolyta; should it come to his knowledge that you had suffered your foolish passion to overcome your reason and duty, by entertaining a passion for one whom nobody knows any thing about, it would make him quite mad; I tremble at the thoughts of it: you know the old gentleman does not spare you when you do any thing he disapproves of.

LELIUS. Oh! for heaven's sake ^{have} done with your moralizing..

MASCARIL. Do you rather have done with this behaviour of yours: I assure you it is none of the best—and you ought to endeavour—

LELIUS. Pray observe, Sir, that a servant who pretends to be my counsellor does not consult his own interest, for no body gets any good to himself by opposing and crossing me.

MASCARIL aside.] So he is in a passion now.— All I said was merely by way of joke, and to try your temper: have I any of the morose features of a reformer about me? and do you think Mascaril a foe to nature? You know the contrary: my greatest fault is being too good-natured.—Laugh at the lectures of your old gray bearded father; spur on, I tell you, and do not mind him: O' my conscience, I have no patience with those old fellows, who, having lost all taste of pleasure themselves, are continually condemning them in those who are younger than themselves. You know my talents, I am absolutely at your service.

LELIUS. Ay! that is right: by talking thus thou art sure to charm me. But to proceed to the purpose: I had the pleasure to find, that when I first declared my passion, it was not wholly disregarded by the lovely author of it. But Leander has just been with me, declaring that he is determined to take Celia from me, and is making preparations to put his design in execution; therefore assist, my dear Mascaril, and ransack thy brain to contrive the speediest means to secure the possession of that adorable creature; stop at nothing, but make use of every trick or ~~for~~^{cat} hood, to make my rival's pretensions prove abortive.

MASCARIL. Stay, let me think a little of this matter. [Aside.] What scheme can I contrive that will help him out at this pinch?

LELIUS. Well, come, your stratagem.

MASCARIL. Poh! what a hurry you are in! My brain is not so quick at conception—I have nicked your business; you must—No, that will not do;—but if you would go—

LELIUS. Whither shall I go?

MASCARIL. That is but a poor device;—I thought of one that—

LELIUS. What, pr'ythee?

MASCARIL. That would not do either—But could you not—

LELIUS. Could I not what?

MASCARIL. No, you could not do it at all. Talk with Anselm—

LELIUS. And what can I say to him?

MASCARIL. Nay, very true, that is out of the frying-pan into the fire. Something must be done however. I would have you go to Trufaldin.

LELIUS. What to do?

MASCARIL. Faith I don't know.

LELIUS. There's no bearing this, in short: you make me mad with these frivolous tales.

MASCARIL. Why, Sir, were you but reasonably strong in ready cash, we had no need to stand dreaming here to find means of compassing our wishes; and we might, by purchasing this slave out of hand, effectually put it out of your rival's power to thwart your inclinations. Trufaldin, who watches her very narrowly, is under some apprehensions of the gang of gypsies who left her here in pawn; and could he make his penny-worths of her, (which they have tried his patience in waiting for) to my certain knowledge he would gladly sell her; for in short, he always lived like a true curmudgeon: he would undergo the discipline of the cart's tail, if he thought he could get a shilling by it: gold is the god to which he pays supreme adoration; but the plague on't is—

LELIUS. Is what?

MASCARIL. That your father is just such another covetous hunk, who will not allow you to dispose of his ducats as you would do: that at present we have not one engine in reserve which can operate to the opening the least purse to your assistance. But let us endeavour to come at the speech of Celia for a moment, to know her sentiments in this affair; this is her window.

LELIUS. But Trufaldin stands close sentry upon her day and night; so I would have you be cautious what you do.

MASCARIL. Keep you still in that corner: Thanks to our stars; here she comes most a-propos.

SCENE III.

CELIA, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

HOW much am I obliged to fortune, lovely Celia, for offering to my sight those heavenly charms you are blest with! And whatever piercing pain those dear eyes may have caused me, I have inexpressible pleasure at the sight of them.

CELIA. My heart, Sir, which, with good reason is astonished at this speech of yours, is not conscious that my eyes have injured any person: and if they have been so unhappy as to offend you, I can assure you it was wholly without my leave.

LELIUS. Oh! no, their glances are too charming to do me any injury. I reckon it my chief glory to cherish the wounds they give me; and—

MASCARIL. Why, you are mounting a note too high: this stile is by no means suitable to our present purpose; let us spend our time better; let us know of her quickly what—

TRUFALDIN within.] Celia!

MASCARIL to Lelius.] Well, what think you now?

LELIUS. O cruel accident! what busines has this plaguy old fellow to interrupt us?

MASCARIL. Go, withdraw, I'll find something to say to him.

SCENE IV.

TRUFALDIN, CELIA, MASCARIL,
and LELIUS retired into a corner.

TRUFALDIN to Celia.

WELL! what business have you out of doors? Have I not forbid you to speak to any mortal whatever?

CELIA. I was formerly acquainted with this honest young man, you have no need to be under any apprehensions.

MASCARIL. Is this Seignior Trufaldin?

CELIA. Yes, the very same.

MASCARIL. Sir, I am your most devoted servant, and it is with the greatest pleasure that I find this opportunity of paying my compliments to a gentleman whose name the world rings with.

TRUFALDIN. Your most humble servant.

MASCARIL. I may incommod you, perhaps: but I have been acquainted formerly with this young woman in another place, who has convinced me of the great skill she has in fortune-telling; I had a desire to consult her a little about a certain affair.

TRUFALDIN. How! do you deal in witchcraft?

CELIA. No, Sir, mine is only white magic.

MASCARIL. The case then is this. The master whom I serve languishes for a fair one, who has captivated him. He would very gladly disclose the flame which preys upon him, to the beauteous object whom he adores: but a wakeful old dragon that guards the treasure, notwithstanding

all his attempts, has hitherto prevented him: and, what perplexes him still more, and completes his misery, is that he has just discovered a most formidable rival; so that I came to consult you, to know whether his amorous cares may have any ground to hope success, being well assured, that from your mouth I may infallibly learn the secret which so nearly concerns us.

CELIA. Under what planet was your master born?

MASCARIL. Under a planet that will never suffer him to alter his love.

CELIA. Without your naming the object he sighs for, the art I am mistress of gives me information sufficient. This young lady has a becoming spirit, and knows how to support a noble pride even in her adversity: she's not of a temper to be too lavish in declaring the secret sentiments that may have been raised in her heart: but I know them as well as herself, and am going to reveal them to you in a more tender manner than she perhaps would be willing to do in her own character.

MASCARIL. O prodigious power of magic virtue!

CELIA. If your master piques himself upon his constancy in this point, and virtue alone be the spring of his design, let him be no longer under apprehensions that he shall sigh in vain: there's room enough to hope; and the fort he wishes to gain is not averse to parly, and would be glad to surrenders.

MASCARIL. This is indeed a great encouragement; but then this fort depends on a governor who may be hard to gain.

CELIA. There lies all the misfortune.

MASCARIL aside.] Deuce take the troublesome cur, how steadily he eyes us.

CELIA. Now for your lesson in what manner you are to behave.

LELIUS joining them.] Pray, Seignior Trufaldin, give yourself no farther uneasiness; 'twas purely in obedience to my order that he has paid you this visit; and I dispatched this trusty servant to you, with a tender of my service, and to treat with you concerning this damsel, whose liberty I am desirous of purchasing, provided that we two can fix upon a price.

MASCARIL aside.] Plague take the afs.

TRUFALDIN. Ho! ho! which of the two to believe?—This story very much contradicts the former.

MASCARIL. Sir, this pretty gentleman's head is turned; don't you know it?

TRUFALDIN. I know what I know—my mind misgave me that there was some plot a hatching here under ground—Get you in [To Celia] and let me not catch you at these liberties again.—As for you two, if I am not much mistaken, you are a couple of downright sharpers; the next time you attempt to play your tricks upon me, let your two stories hang better together.

S C E N E V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

A Dmirably well done! I wish, without a compliment, that he had drubbed us both together for company. What business had you to

shew yourself, and, like a blunderer as you are, come and give the lie to every thing I had been saying?

LELIUS. I thought I did right.

MASCARIL. Oh! 'twas most wisely judged: but hang it, this action ought not to surprize me; you are so fruitful in counter-plots of this nature, that your wrong-headed freaks can astonish the world no longer.

LELIUS. Good heaven! what a rout is here about a trifling mistake! What, is the damage so great as to be irretrievable? In short, if thou canst not give me possession of Celia, at least take care all Leander's schemes be broken, that he may not be beforehand with me, in purchasing the fair one. But lest my presence should be further mischievous, I'll withdraw.

MASCARIL alone.] You do well— To say the truth, now, money would be the surest agent in this affair: but this spring failing us, we must betake ourselves to some other.

S C E N E VI.

A N S E L M, M A S C A R I L.

A N S E L M.

BODY o'me, 'tis a strange age this we live in: I am perfectly ashamed on't; never was there such love of wealth, and never so much difficulty to come by one's own. Debts now-a-days, be as careful as we can, are like children which are conceived with pleasure, but brought forth with pain. Every one is fond of putting money into his purse;

but when the time comes that we are to be delivered of it, then it is the labouring pangs seize us. E'en let it be so;—come, 'tis no trifle this, of receiving a brace of a hundred pieces that have been due any time these two long years; nay, 'tis a great mercy.

MASCARIL aside.] Od's my life! what glorious game is there! To shoot them flying now! Hist, I must try to get a little nearer, that I may tickle the trout a little. I have a lul-a-bee song by heart will send him to rest. [Joining him.] Seignior Anselm, I have just been visiting——

ANSELM. Who, pr'ythee?

MASCARIL. Your Nerina.

ANSELM. Well, what does the little tyrant say about me?

MASCARIL. She's all on fire for you.

ANSELM. She?

MASCARIL. And loves you so, it would pity one's very heart to see her.

ANSELM. How happy thou mak'st me!

MASCARIL. The poor thing is even at death's door with love.—O my dearest Anselm, cries she, every moment, when shall Hymen unite our hearts? when wilt thou deign to quench these flames?

ANSELM. But why should she have concealed them from me all this while? These girls are strange dissemblers! Mascaril, without flattery, what say'st thou? Though I am somewhat advanced in years, yet I have something still about me that pleases the fair-sex.

MASCARIL. Yes, truly, that face of yours is a good passable face still: if it is not of the handsomest, it is very agreeable.

ANSELM. So that——

MASCARIL, endeavouring to steal the purse.] So that she dotes on you; and regards you no longer—

ANSELM. What?—

MASCARIL. But as a husband: and fully designs—

ANSELM. And fully designs?—

MASCARIL. And fully designs, come what will, to take your purse.

ANSELM. Ha!

MASCARIL. [Sliding the purse to the ground.]— Your pursy-pouting lips close to hers.

ANSELM. Hoh! I understand you. Come hither, the next time you see her, be sure to say all the fine things you can of me.

MASCARIL. Let me alone.

ANSELM. Adieu.

MASCARIL. Heaven guide you.

ANSELM, returning.] Hold! In truth I had like to have been guilty of a strange neglect; and you might justly have accused me of slighting you: I engage thee, here, to assist in carrying on my amour; I receive from thee a most agreeable piece of news, without so much as thanking thee for thy diligence. Here, be sure you remember—

MASCARIL. O, dear Sir, not a penny.

ANSELM. I insist upon it.

MASCARIL. I won't indeed: I do this without any regard to interest.

ANSELM. I know thou dost: but however—

MASCARIL. I tell you I will not, Anselm; I am a man of honour, this offends me.

ANSELM. Fare thee well then, Mascaril!

MASCARIL aside.] Tedious prattle!

ANSELM returning.] I have a mind you should

carry the fair object of my desires a little present from me: I'll give thee something to buy her a ring, or any other trinket thou shalt think proper.

MASCARIL. No, no, pray have done with your money; without giving yourself any concern about it, I'll make the present; I have a modish ring left in my hands, which you may pay me for afterwards, if it fits her.

ANSELM. So let it be then, give it her for me: but above all, manage matters so, that she may still wish to make me her own.

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, ANSELM, MASCARIL.

W LELIUS, taking up the purse.
HOSE purse is this?

ANSELM. O bless me! I dropt it, and should have verily believed afterwards that some-body had robb'd me of it: I am extremely obliged to you for this kind care, which has saved me a great deal of uneasiness, and restored me my money. I'll make haste home, and lock it up safe.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

I MASCARIL.
T is officiously, most officiously done, let me die.

LELIUS. Faith, if it had not been for me, he would have lost his money.

MASCARIL. Yes, to be sure, you do wonders, and have paid it off to-day with a most exquisite

judgment, and supreme good fortune. We shall thrive amain, go on as you have begun.

LELIUS. What's the matter then? What have I done now?

MASCARIL. You have play'd the fool, since I must speak plain.—He knows very well how low his father keeps him; that a formidable rival sticks close on our skirts; yet for all this, when I strike a bold stroke to oblige him, of which I take all the shame and hazard upon myself—

LELIUS. How! was this—

MASCARIL. Yes, blunderer, it was to release the captive that I palmed the money, which your great care has balked us of.

LELIUS. If that's the case, I am to blame. But who could have thought it?

MASCARIL. It really required a most refined imagination.

LELIUS. You should have tip'd me some sign.

MASCARIL. What, I suppose you would have me carry eyes in my back.—In the name of Jove, be quiet, and let's hear no more of these silly speeches: another person, after all this, would, perhaps, give up the cause: but I have a master-stroke just now come into my head, which I design immediately to set about executing, on this sole condition though, that if—

LELIUS. No. I promise thee, I'll not interfere again either in word or deed.

MASCARIL. Hence then; the very sight of you kindles my wrath.

LELIUS. But pr'ythee, make haste, lest the design—

MASCARIL. Well, leave me: I'll set about it instantly. [Exit Lelius.] Bring but this project

once to bear, if it takes, as I think it must, it will be a most exquisite piece of roguery. But let's to our experiment—Good, here comes my man in the very nick of time.

SCENE IX.

PANDOLPH, MASCARIL.

MA SCARIL. PANDOLPH.

MASCARIL. Sir.

PANDOLPH. To speak freely, I am much dissatisfied with my son.

MASCARIL. With my master? You are not the only person who complains of him: his insupportable ill conduct in every thing drives me beyond all patience.

PANDOLPH. Indeed! why I thought you and he were perfectly well agreed.

MASCARIL. I! Believe it not, Sir: I catch at all opportunities of throwing in a hint about his duty, then are we perpetually at daggers-drawing; this very moment we had a quarrel again about his match with Hyppolita, to which I find he has a strange aversion; and by a most palpable act of disobedience violates all the respect due to a father.

PANDOLPH. And had you a quarrel with him for this?

MASCARIL. Indeed had I, and that a severe one too.

PANDOLPH. I was strangely deceived then: I took it for granted, that do what he would, he was sure of thee for a second.

MASCARIL. Me? See what this world's come

to! How is innocence always opprefed! Were you but duly apprized of my integrity, you would give me the additional pay of tutor, whereas I am only hired as his servant. Yes, you yourself could not fay more than I do, to bring him to order. In the name of goodness, Sir, fay I to him very often, do not be carried away thus with every wind that blows; keep within bounds; observe the worthy father which heaven has bleſt you with; what reputation he has in the world; forbear to grieve him by your behaviour, and live, as he does, like a man of honour.

PANDOLPH. That was talking to the purpose: and what anſwer could he make to this?

MASCARIL. Anſwer? Why only sham-stuff to perplex me. Not but at the bottom he has really the principles of honour, which he derived from you; but reaſon, at preſent, is not his master. Might I be allowed to advise with freedom, you should ſoon ſee him brought to your hand with little or no trouble.

PANDOLPH. Speak freely.

MASCARIL. What I am going to fay is a ſecret, that, if diſcovered, would hurt me greatly; but I can truſt it, with full aſſurance, to your pruſcence.

PANDOLPH. You may do it without the leaſt fear.

MASCARIL. Know then that your ſchemes are ſacrificed to the fond impreſſions a certain ſlave has made upon your ſon.

PANDOLPH. I have heard as much; but it concerns me more, as I have it from thy mouth.

MASCARIL. You fee how much of a confidēt I am—

PANDOLPH. I must own your behaviour at once charms and amazes me.

MASCARIL. In the mean time do you really wish to recal him to his duty, without any bustle? You must—I am constantly afraid lest some-body should surprize us together; should he come to the knowledge of this conversation, it would be over with me—You must, as I was saying, to knock all this affair on the head at once, go underhand, and purchase this slave that's so much idolized, and send her beyond seas directly. Anselm is very intimate with Trufaldin: let him go buy her for you this very morning. Afterwards, if you chuse to put her into my hands, I have acquaintance with some merchants, and dare answer to make the money she shall cost you, and so send her a packing in spite of your son. For, in short, if we would have him dispos'd for matrimony, we must first divert this growing passion; and besides, admitting he were once resolv'd to wear the yoke you design for him, yet this other girl, having it in her power to revive his foolish fancy, might prejudice him against matrimony again.

PANDOLPH. Your reasoning is very just, and I much approve of your advice. Here comes Anselm; go thy way; I'll do my best to get immediate possession of this plaguy captive, and put her into thy hands to finish the rest.

MASCARIL alone.] Good: now to inform my master of this good news. Long live knaves, and knavery, say I!

SCENE X.

HIPPOLYTA, MASCARIL.

HIPPOLYTA.

AY, villain, is this the way of serving me? I have overheard all you have been saying, and have myself been a witness to your treachery: had I not, could I possibly have believed it? Thou drivest a trade of cheating, and has sold me a most precious bargain. Thou hadst promised me, miscreant, and I had all the reason in the world to expect it, that thou wouldst favour my passion for Leander, that thy address and diligence should find means to disengage me from Lelius, whom they would force me to marry, and save me from my father's project; and all this while thou art doing quite the contrary. But thou shalt find thyself much mistaken—I know a certain method of setting aside this purchase thou art driving at so eagerly; and I'll go this instant, and—

MASCARIL. Hey-day! how hasty you are! you take the pet in an instant; and without staying to inquire whither you have reason or not, you play the little fury with me. I'm in the wrong, and ought to make you confess that you have wrong'd me, before I take a step further, since you abuse me so outrageously.

HIPPOLYTA. With what illusion dost thou propose to dazzle my eyes, traitor? Canst thou deny what I have just now heard?

MASCARIL. Not at all: but you must know, that this whole contrivance is meant wholly to do you service: that this fly piece of advice which has

no appearance of guile, brings both the old wood-cocks into the noose at once: that all the pains I have taken to come at Celia by their means, was for no purpose on earth but to give Lelius the possession of her; and to order matters so, that Anselm, being work'd up into an excess of passion to see himself balk'd of his imagined son-in-law, might make choice of Leander.

HIPPOLYTA. What! haft thou formed all this mighty project, at which I took so much offence, purely to serve me, Mascaril?

MASCARIL. Yes, for you. But since my good offices are so ill received, that I must bear to this unmerciful degree with your humours, and further, by way of reward for my services, you come here with a mighty air, and treat me as a pitiful fellow, a scoundrel, a common cheat; I'll presently take care to correct the mistake I have been guilty of, and break off my enterprize out of hand.

HIPPOLYTA holding him.] Nay, pr'ythee be not so severe upon me, and forgive the inconsiderate fallies of a sudden passion.

MASCARIL. No, no, let me go: I have it yet in my power to set aside the scheme you are so terribly offended at. From this time forward you shall have no reason to complain of my meddling too much. Yes, you shall have my master, I promise you, you shall.

HIPPOLYTA. For heaven's sake, good lad, be not in such a passion, I judged too hardly of thee, I was to blame, I confess I was; [Pulls out her purse.] but I intend this shall make atonement for my fault. Canst thou find in thy heart to quit me in this manner?

MASCARIL. No, I cannot, strive whatever I

will. But, after all, you was over hasty; you was indeed. Consider with yourself, there is nothing wounds a noble spirit so much, as to find the least imputation upon its honour.

HIPPOLYTA. It is true, I gave thee some very coarse language, but accept of these pieces as a balm for the wounds of your bleeding honour.

MASCARIL. Fy! I had no such meaning; I am very tender in these points; but my passion begins to abate a little already: we must bear with the failings of one's friends.

HIPPOLYTA. Do you think you can bring my design to bear after all? And do you believe these bold projects will have that happy success in my amour which you seem to promise me?

MASCARIL. Never torment yourself about it. I have springs enough ready to set variety of engines at work, and though this stratagem should fall short of our wishes, what this can't do another shall.

HIPPOLYTA. Depend upon it, Hippolyta will, at least, not be ungrateful.

MASCARIL. 'Tis not the hope of profit that influences me.

HIPPOLYTA. But hold, I see your master coming. He makes signs that he wants to speak with you; I'll leave you for the present.

SCENE XI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

WHAT the deuce do you sauntering here? You promise wonders, but your slackness in performance is not to be parallel'd. Had not my good genius prompted me, all my hopes and desires would have been totally destroyed, and I had been given up to irretrievable sorrow; in short, had I not been in this very place, Anselm had got the captive, and I had been deprived of her. He was just carrying her off; but I parried the thrust, warded off the blow, and prevailed so far upon the fears of Trufaldin, as to make him keep the girl at home.

MASCARIL. Thrice already! when we come to ten we'll score up.—It was by my own contrivance, eternal shatterbrains! that Anselm undertook to make this purchase. She was to have been left absolutely in my hands, when in-comes your cursed officiousnes between us. And think you that I love you well enough to start a fresh project? I would sooner a thousand times be a mule, become a pitcher, a cabbage, a lantern, a moping screech-owl, or that Satan should twist your neck about.

LELIUS alone.] I must have him to some tavern, and let him vent his passion on the bottles and glasses. This was dev'lish unlucky, faith!



ACT II. SCENE I.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WELL, I find that notwithstanding all I have sworn, I must at length yield to your entreaties, embark in fresh difficulties to support your interest, which I was fully resolved to have given up. So soft a fool am I. Had dame nature made me o't'other sex, I leave you to guess what would have happened. Nevertheless, don't you go upon this presumption, and give your back-stroke to the project I am about; don't come blundering a-thwart me, and dash my expectations. Then as to Anselm, we shall make your excuse to him in such a manner as to gain every point we can wish. But should you suffer your imprudence to break out again, farewell, say I, all care of mine, for the darling object.

LELIUS. No, I shall grow wiser, I tell thee; fear not, you shall see—

MASCARIL. Well, mind that you keep your word. I have forméd a hard stratagem in your favour. Your father discovers an extreme laziness in not completing all your wishes by his death. I have just kill'd him (in words, I mean) I blaze it abroad that the good man, being surprized with an apoplexy, is departed this life. But first, to counterfeit this death the better, I have sent him packing to his country-seat: they have brought him news, by my contrivance too, that the labourers at work in his

building, among the foundations which they are now a laying, have accidentally struck upon a large treasure. Away flies he in an instant: and as his whole family, excepting us two, have attended him into the country, I kill him to-day, in every one's imagination, and proceed to bury him in effigy. In short, I have let you into the whole design I have laid for you; play your part well; and as to mine, if you catch me but faltering in one syllable of it, hang me up that very moment for a fool.

S C E N E II.

LELIUS alone.

WELL, it must be confessed that this fellow's wit finds strange means to bring my wishes to their full accomplishment; but when one is heartily enamoured with a beautiful object, what would we not do to be happy? If love is a handsome excuse enough for committing a crime, sure it may be sufficient for a harmless piece of imposture, which love to-day has forced me to comply with, by the soothing hope of the happy consequence that will accrue from it. Bless me! how expeditious the rogue has been! I see they are entered into discourse about it already—But I must retire, and prepare to play my part.

SCENE III.

MASCARIL, ANSELM.

MASCARIL.

I Do not wonder that you are greatly surprized at this news.

ANSELM. To die in this manner!

MASCARIL. He was very much to blame, most certainly. I owe him a grudge for an affront of this kind.

ANSELM. Not so much as to take time to be ill!

MASCARIL. No, never was man in such a hurry to die.

ANSELM. And how does Lelius behave?

MASCARIL. He raves, and has lost all temper; he has beat himself black and blue in several places, and resolves to follow his papa into the grave. In short, the excess of his grief has determined me to bury the old gentleman with the utmost speed, for fear this object, which feeds his unhappy melancholy, should tempt him to some fatal extremity.

ANSELM. No matter, you ought to defer it till the evening: besides, that I have a strong desire to see him once more. He that buries a friend too hastily, very often murders him; for a man is frequently thought dead when he has only the appearance of being so.

MASCARIL. I'll warrant him as dead as a door-nail. But now, to return to what we were talking of, Lelius has resolved, (and a meritorious action it will be) to make a magnificent funeral for his

father, and to cheer the deceased a little on his hard fate, by the pleasure of seeing these honours done to his Manes; he's left in great circumstances, but as he is a novice in his affairs, and cannot yet perceive but the gross of his estate lies in other parts, or what he has here consists in bills, he would beg of you to excuse the too great heat he shewed of late in consequence of the law-suit, and to lend him a sum sufficient to defray this last duty—

ANSELM. I understand you, and will go see him: . . .

MASCARIL alone.] Hitherto, at least, every thing runs smooth as possible; now to secure that the rest shall answer: and, lest we should split in the very harbour, let us steer the vessel with all hands aloft, and a sharp look out.

S C E N E IV.

ANSELM, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

ANSELM.

COME, let us leave the house; I cannot, but with the utmost concern, see him huddled up in this strange manner: poor soul! so soon gone! He was alive and well but this morning.

MASCARIL. One may travel a great way in a short time.

LELIUS weeping.] Oh !

ANSELM. Nay, pray, dear Lelius! In short, he was but a man; there is no resisting the dispensations of providence.

LELIUS. Oh!

ANSELM. It dashes all human glory without the least warning, and has ever had a particular spite against it.

LELIUS. Oh!

ANSELM. This merciless devourer would not lose one gripe of his murderous teeth for the prayers of mankind; all the world must feel them.

LELIUS. Oh!

MASCARIL. You might as well preach to the walls, Sir; this sorrow is too deep rooted to be plucked up.

ANSELM. If, notwithstanding all these arguments, you must still persist in your sorrow, my dear Lelius, at least behave like a man, and endeavour to moderate it a little.

LELIUS. Oh!

MASCARIL. He won't do it: I know his humour.

ANSELM. However, agreeable to the message of your servant, I bring you here as much money as will suffice to perform the funeral obsequies of a father——

LELIUS. Oh! Oh!

MASCARIL. How that word increases his grief! 'tis death to him but to think of his loss.

ANSELM. I'm sensible you will find by the good man's papers, that I stand debtor for a much greater sum; but had I, upon computation, not ow'd you any thing at all, you should have had the free command of my purse; please to take it, I am wholly at your service, and shall make it appear that I am so.

LELIUS going.] Oh!

MASCARIL. What a deep concern is my master under!

ANSELM. Mascaril, I think it would not be improper for me to have some kind of acknowledgment under his hand, were it but two words.

MASCARIL. Oh!

ANSELM. What turn things may take is uncertain.

MASCARIL. Oh!

ANSELM. Get him to sign me the note I require.

MASCARIL. Alas! how is it possible to ask him such a question in the condition he is in. Give him time to get rid of his grief; and when his troubles abate a little, I'll take care immediately to get you your security. Adieu, I find my heart fwell with grief, and I must go take my fill of weeping with him. Oh! oh!

ANSELM alone.] This world is full of crosses; every man feels them more or less continually; and in this world we never can expect—

S C E N E V.

P A N D O L P H, A N S E L M,

A N S E L M.

HEAVENSI how I tremble! 'tis Pandolph that walks! could he be really dead! How wan his face looks since his death! Mercy o' me! approach me not, I beseech you, I do not chuse to have any dealings with a ghost.

PANDOLPH. What means this whimsical rhapsody?

ANSELM. Tell me, at a distance, what business brings you here? If you can take so much pains to bid me farewell, it is too ceremonious, and in good

earnest, I could have dispensed with the compliment. If your soul is in purgatory and wants masses, why you shall have them upon my word, and don't fright me at this rate. On the faith of a terrified man, I'll go this instant, and pray for you in such a manner, that your spirit shall be perfectly contented.

Then vanish away,
And good heaven, I pray,
Of joys be the donor,
Unto your dead honour.

PANDOLPH laughing.] Notwithstanding I am so much vexed, I can't forbear laughing at this droll scene.

ANSELM. Strange! you're wond'rous merry for a dead man.

PANDOLPH. Why, is this all joke, pray tell me, or is it downright madness, to treat a living man as if he was dead?

ANSELM. Alas! my dear friend, it is but too true that you are dead; I myself just now saw you.

PANDOLPH. What? could I die with knowing any thing of the matter?

ANSELM. As soon as Mascalil told me the news, it went to the very heart of me.

PANDOLPH. But, seriously speaking, are you dreaming? Are you broad awake yet? don't you know me?

ANSELM. You are clothed with an aerial body, which counterfeits your true one, but which may take another shape in the twinkling of an eye. I dread seeing you fwell up to the size of a giant, and all your features hideously distorted: for good-

ness sake, don't take any shocking figure; I have been scared sufficiently for this time.

PANDOLPH. At another time, Anselm, the simplicity which accompanies this credulity of yours, would have given me most excellent diversion: and I should have carried on the diversion a little longer; but this story of my death, joined with that forged one of the treasure, which I was told upon the road there was nothing at all in, raises in my mind a just suspicion that Mascaril is a rogue, one of the first rank, whom neither fear nor conscience can restrain, and who has strange hidden ways to compass his ends.

ANSELM. What, have they play'd upon me then? tricked and defrauded me? Very fine, truly! --- I'll take courage;—I'll touch him and satisfy myself. 'Tis really the very man: a pox take me for an oaf as I am! As you love me, don't divulge this story, they'll work it up into a farce that will shame me for ever. But, Pandolph, give me your assistance to get my money back, which I lent them for your funeral.

PANDOLPH. The money, say you? Hoh! there: the shoe pinches, there lies the hidden stress of the whole affair: to your cost be it. For my part, I shan't trouble myself about it; I'll go get the best information I can about this matter, as it affects Mascaril, and if I catch him tardy, cost what it will, I'll make him swing for't.

ANSELM alone.] And I, for giving credit, like an ass as I am, to a scoundrel, must in one day then lose both my sense and my money. It finely becomes me, faith, to wear these gray hairs, and to run so readily into playing the fool: not to stay to examine a little upon the first report—but I see—

SCENE VI.

LELIUS, ANSELM.

LELIUS.

WITH this passport I may boldly make Trufaldin a visit.

ANSELM. I'm glad to see your grief has left you.

LELIUS. What say ye? No, it can never leave a heart which desires for ever to cherish it.

ANSELM. I came back immediately, to acquaint you, that I had made a mistake with you a little while ago; that among the louis d'ors, though they look very good, I had, without minding it, put some which I look upon to be counterfeit; and I have brought money enough about me to change them. The insupportable villainy of our clippers and coiners is grown to such a height in this slate, that one can't receive any money now which is not suspicious. In truth, it would be doing well to have them all hang'd.

LELIUS. I'm much obliged to you for your friendly and upright behaviour, but I saw none among them that were bad, as I thought.

ANSELM. I shall know them very well: let's see them: let's see them—is here all?

LELIUS. Yes.

ANSELM. So much the better. Ah! have I got you once again into my possession, my dear treasure? once more into my pocket? and as for you, my gallant sharper, you'll never touch one penny of them more. You kill people, I warrant you, while they are in full health; and what would

you ha' done with me, a poor old decrepit father-in-law? I was going to make a fine piece of work here! I had like to have pitched upon a most discreet son-in-law, in you, good Sir! Go, villain! go and hang yourself for mere shame and vexation.

LELIUS alone.] A palpable hit, I must own; what a thunder-stroke is this! How could he come to the knowledge of our stratagem so soon?

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL...

WHAT! are you here? I have been looking for you every where... Well, have we gained our point at last? I'll give the best sharper of them all six trials to do the same. Come, give me the pelf, that I may go directly and buy the slave, your rival will be strangely confounded when this is done.

LELIUS. Ah, my dear boy! the tables are strangely turned; wouldst thou think what a crost trick fortune has played me?

MASCARIL. Well, what has happened now?

LELIUS. Anselm, being informed of the cheat, has just now got every farthing again that he had lent us, under a pretence of changing some pieces he suspected.

MASCARIL. You do but joke, I suppose.

LELIUS. 'Tis too true.

MASCARIL. In good earnest?

LELIUS. In good earnest; I am inconsolable for it; I know you are going to be in a furious passion,

MASCARIL. I Sir? More fool I then; anger is a torment, and I am resolved to make myself happy, come what will. Be Celia, after all, captive or free; let Leander purchase her, or stay she where she is; for my part, I shall be just as much concerned on one side of the question as o' t'other.

LELIUS. Nay, don't be so indifferent to me, but be a little more indulgent to my want of prudence. Setting aside this last misfortune, will you not confess I had done wonders; and that as to the sham-funeral, I imposed upon the world with a grief so natural, that the most sharp-sighted would have thought it real.

MASCARIL. You have, indeed, good reason to boast.

LELIUS. Oh! I am to blame, and I'm willing to confess it, but if thou hadst ever any regard for me, redress this disaster, and continue thy assistance.

MASCARIL. I beg to be excused; I have not leisure.

LELIUS. Mafcaril! my dear boy!

MASCARIL. No.

LELIUS. Do me this favour.

MASCARIL. No, I tell thee.

LELIUS. If you are inflexible, I'll kill myself.

MASCARIL. Do so; you are wholly at your liberty.

LELIUS. Can't I possibly work upon thee?

MASCARIL. No.

LELIUS. Dost thou see my sword ready drawn?

MASCARIL. Yes.

LELIUS. I'll plunge it to the hilt.

MASCARIL. Do just what you please.

LELIUS. Can you have the heart to be the cause of my death?

MASCARIL. No.

LELIUS. Adieu, Mascaril.

MASCARIL. Farewell, master Lelius.

LELIUS. What?

MASCARIL. Dispatch yourself then quick: pshaw! here's tedious haranguing indeed!

LELIUS. I know you would have me play the fool, and kill myself, that you might come in for my clothes.

MASCARIL. Pshaw! I knew this was all but grimace; and however our sparks may swear they'll do the business, they are not so forward now-a-days to kill themselves in good earnest.

S C E N E VIII.

TRUFALDIN, LEANDER, LELIUS,
MASCARIL.

[Trufaldin taking Leander aside and whispering to him.]

LELIUS.

WHAT do I see? my rival and Trufaldin together! He's going to buy Celia. Oh! I tremble for fear!

MASCARIL. There's not the least doubt, but he'll do all that he can; and if he has money he may do all he will; for my part I'm in raptures at it. This is the fruit of your hair-brain'd blunders, and your impatience.

LELIUS. What must I do? Say, advise me.

MASCARIL. I don't know.

LELIUS. Stay, I'll go pick a quarrel with him.

MASCARIL. And what good will that do?

LELIUS. What wouldest thou have me do, to ward off this blow?

MASCARIL. Go, go, I forgive you; I cast an eye of pity on you once more, leave me to watch them, I am apt to think I shall be able, by fair means, to come at the knowledge of what he's about.

[Exit Lelius.]

TRUFALDIN to Leander.] When the messengers come by and by, the thing is absolutely done.

[Exit Trufaldin.]

MASCARIL aside, and going out.] I must trap him, and get to be trusted with his designs, that I may baffle them the easier.

LEANDER alone.] Thanks to heaven, my happiness is now beyond the reach of chance: I have found the way to insure it, and have no more to fear: whatever a rival may undertake hereafter, it is no longer in his power to hurt me.

S C E N E IX.

LEANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL speaking this speech within, and them coming on the stage.

OH! oh! help! murder! My brains are beat out! help! murder! oh! oh! oh! traitor! barbarian! help! help!

LEANDER. What's the matter, friend? What's the meaning of all this outcry?

MASCARIL. He has laid on me two hundred blows with a cudgel.

LEANDER. Who?

MASCARIL. Lelius.

LEANDER. And for what reason?

MASCARIL. For a mere trifle he has turned me away, and beat me most unmercifully.

LEANDER. Fy! he is really much to blame.

MASCARIL. I swear, if it is ever in my power, I'll be revenged on him for this barbarous treatment: yes, Mr. Thresher, with a vengeance to you, I shall give you to know people's bones are not to be broke for nothing: though I'm but a valet, I am a man of honour; and after having employed me four years as a servant, you should not ha' paid me off with the twags of a sapling; nor have affronted me in so sensible a part as that of the shoulder: I tell you once more, I shall find a way to revenge myself. You're in love with a pretty slave, you know, and you have been wanting me to get her for you, but I'll be hanged if I don't get her for another, and help yourself how you can.

LEANDER. Hear me, Mascaril, and lay aside your passion: I always lik'd thee, and always wish'd from my heart, that a young fellow of spirit, and trusty as thou art, could once take a thorough fancy to my service: in short, if thou think'st the thing worth thy acceptance, if thou hast a mind to serve me, from this moment I retain thee.

MASCARIL. I accept the offer, Sir, and the more readily, because propitious fortune offers me a handsome revenge in serving you; and that in the very pains I take to please you, I shall find a punishment for the brute I have left: in a word, by my dexterity Celia and you——

LEANDER. My passion has already done that office for itself; fir'd with that object, fair without

a Flemish, I have just made the purchase; for a price, too, much below her real value.

MASCARIL. How! is Celia yours then?

LEANDER. You should see her appear, were I but absolute master of my actions: but, alas! it is my father who is so: since he is resolved, as I understand by a letter brought me, to fix my marriage with Hippolyta, I am cautious lest this transaction, coming to his ears, should exasperate him: therefore, in my bargain with Trufaldin (for I am just come from his house) I acted entirely in the name of another: the bargain struck, my ring was pitched on as the token, on sight of which he was immediately to deliver Celia. I am studying first ways and means to conceal her from the eyes of others, who so much charms my own; to find, with all expedition, some retired place where secretly to lodge this charming captive.

MASCARIL. A little way out of town, lives an old relation of mine, whose house I can take the freedom to offer you; there you may safely lodge her, without a possibility of any body's knowing any thing of the matter.

LEANDER. Faith, so I can: thou hast pleased me to my wish. Here, take this ring, and go get possession of this fair one for my use: as soon as Trufaldin sees the token, the girl will be delivered into thy hands: carry her to that house, when—But soft! here comes Hippolyta.

S C E N E X.

HIPPOLYTA, LEANDER, MASCARIL.

HIPPOLYTA.

I Have news to tell you, Leander; but would it be agreeable, or disagreeable to you?

LEANDER. to judge of that and make answer off-hand, one should know it.

HIPPOLYTA. Give me your hand then; in our walk towards church I may tell it you.

LEANDER to Mascaril.] Go, and do as I bid you. [Exeunt.

S C E N E XI.

MASCARIL alone.

YES, I will serve you up a dish of my dressing: was there ever in the world so lucky fellow? What a sudden extasy will this give my master! His mistress to fall into our hands in this manner! to derive his whole happiness from whence one would have expected his ruin! and his rival to procure him this happiness too! After this great exploit, it is our pleasure that due preparation be made to paint me as a hero, crowned with laurel, and that under the portrait be inscribed in golden letters, LONG LIVE MASCARIL, THE KING OF KNAVES.

SCENE XIII.

TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

SOHO there!

TRUFALDIN. What's your business, friend?

MASCARIL. This ring, if you know it, will inform you what business brought me hither.

TRUFALDIN. Yes, I know that ring again perfectly well; stay here a little, I'll go fetch you the slave.

SCENE XIII.

TRUFALDIN, MESSENGER, MASCARIL.

MESSENGER to Trufaldin.

DO me the favour, Sir, to direct me to the gentleman—

TRUFALDIN. To what gentleman?

MESSENGER. I think his name is Trufaldin.

TRUFALDIN. What do you want? I am he.

MESSENGER. Only to deliver this letter, Sir.

TRUFALDIN reads.

“ Providence, whose goodness is solicitous for
 “ my life, has just brought to my ears a most welcome report, that my daughter, who was stolen away from me when an infant of four years of age, by some strollers, is a slave with you, under the name of CELIA. If you ever experienced what it is to be a father, and you find yourself touched with the fondness of natural f-

" fection; let me entreat you to keep my beloved
 " child for me, and treat her as if she were your
 " own: I am setting out myself on my journey to
 " bring her back again; and shall, ere long, make
 " you so handsome a recompence for your trouble,
 " that from your own good fortune, which I am
 " determined to advance, you shall bless the day
 " in which you were the occasion of that of.

" Madrid. " Don Pedro de Gufman,

" Marquis of Montalcana."

TRUFALDIN. Though no great faith is due to people of their country, they who sold her to me, told me positively, that I should soon see her fetched back by somebody, or other; and should have no reason to complain: yet was I now, through the impatience of my temper, going to lose the fruits of the most promising hopes.

[To the Messenger.]

One moment later, and your journey had been in vain: I was going, this instant, to give her up into his hands; but enough—I shall take all the care of her you can wish. [Exit Messenger.

[To Mascaril.]

And you, friend, you hear what this letter says, you'll tell him that sent you here; that I can't possibly keep my word; let him come and take his money again.

MASCARIL. But consider, Sir, this is doing the gentleman an injury.

TRUFALDIN. No more prattling, but about your business.

MASCARIL alone.] Oh! the plaguy packet we

have now received! Fortune has clevery jilted me, in the height of expectation: and in the nick of ill-luck comes this Spanish courier; may thunder and hail go with him—Never certainly had so fine a beginning in so short a time so bad an ending.

SCENE XIV.

LELIUS laughing, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WHAT gay transport of joy inspires you now?

LELIUS. Pr'ythee let me laugh a little longer, and then I'll tell thee.

MASCARIL. By all means, let us laugh heartily, we have abundant reaſon so to do.

LELIUS. Oh! I shall now have no more of thy expostulations: thou'lt have nothing to hit me o' the teeth with; thou who art always dinning in my ears that I ruin all thy artifices, like a busy body as I am: I have my own self play'd one of the cleanest pranks in the world; 'tis true I am sometimes too hasty, and now and then a little too fiery: but for all this, when I have a mind to it, I have really as quick an invcntion as any man alive; and even you yourself shall be forced to acknowledge that what I have done must procced from a reach of invention that few are masters of.

MASCARIL. Let us know then what this wondrous invention of yours has done.

LELIUS. Why, then, you must know, my mind having been struck with a terrible panic upon seeing Trufaldin along with my rival, I was casting about with myself to find a remedy for that mischief;

when calling all my invention to my aid, I conceived, digested, and executed a stratagem, at sight of which all thine, which thou makest such a rout with, ought, beyond dispute, to strike their colours.

MASCARIL. But what may this be?

LELIUS. Nay, pr'ythee, have a little patience—I feigned a letter then with great exactness, as writ from a great Spanish nobleman to Trufaldin, setting forth, that whereas he had heard by great good luck, that a certain slave named Celia, in his possession, was a daughter of his, formerly kidnapp'd by a gang of thieves; it was his intention to come and redeem her; and he conjures him, at least, not to part with her; to take special care of her; that on this account he was setting out from Spain, and would make him amends for his care of her, by such noble presents, that he should never repent being the instrument of his happiness.

MASCARIL. Mighty well indeed!

LELIUS. Nay, but hear me out: here's something much cleverer still: the letter I speak of was delivered to him; but can't thou imagine how? in such a nick of time, that the porter told me had it not been for this droll trick, a fellow, who looked confoundedly balked, had carried her off that moment.

MASCARIL. And could you do all this without the help of the devil?

LELIUS. Yes; wouldst thou have believed me capable of so subtle a piece of wit? At least commend my address, and the dexterity with which I have happily overturned all my rival's designs.

MASCARIL. I want eloquence to praise you as you deserve. Yes, sufficiently to display this sublime

effort, this fine stratagem of war atchieved befo our eyes, this grand, this never to be paralleled effect of an imagination, which yields to no person living, my tongue is too feeble, and would I ha those of the most exquisitely learned, that I mig sing in smoothest verse, at least, in learned prose. That you will eternally continue, in spite of all ca be said, the self same you have been all your day that is to say, a mind turned cross o' the grain, distemper'd reason, and always upon the fret; the reverse of good sense; a left-handed judgment, pragmatalical intermeddler, a loobily ass, a rash ha brain'd puppy, what can I think of? A----- thou fand times beyond what I can express. This is on ly but an abridgment of your panegyric.

LELIUS. Pi'ythee, inform me, what puts the into such a passion with me? What have I don now? Tell me.

MASCARIL. No, you've done nothing at all; but I desire you will not follow me.

LELIUS. I'll follow thee through the world, to find out this mystery.

MASCARIL. Do so, come on then; get your legs in order, I shall find you something will wor them.

LELIUS alone.] He has slipt me. Unspeakabl misfortune! What can he mean? And what in office can I have done myself?

A C T III. S C E N E I.

M A S C A R I L alone.

PEACE, my good-nature, and plead no more; you are a fool; and I'll not hearken to you: my anger, I confess you are in the right n't — It is insupportable to be doing, over and over again, what a meddling coxcomb undoes, and I ought to give it up after he has defeated such glorious attempts — But let us argue the matter coolly; if I follow the bent of my passion, though justly, the world will say I sunk under difficulties, that I find myself at the extremity of my subtlety: and what will then become of that public esteem which has placed thee foremost in the rank of the most renowned cheats? and which thou hast acquired on so many occasions, as never having been found short of inventions? Honour, Mascaril, is a glorious thing: do not discontinue thy noble labours; and whatever a master may have done to incense thee, compleat the work, or thy own glory, not to oblige him — But how! What canst thou do whilst the clearest streams are continually troubled by this adverse demon? Thou eest that he is perpetually frustrating all thy expectations! and that 'tis beating the air but to pretend to stop that unbridled torrent which, in a moment, overturns the beautiful structures which thy art has raised. Well, yet one stroke more at least, out of ove and kindness, let us sacrifice our pains and hazard the success; and if he still persists to baffle our good fortune, agreed, let us withdraw all our suc-

cours. Yet, after all, our affairs would take no very ill turn, if by this we could defeat our rival, and that Leander at last, tir'd with the chace, would leave us one whole day for what I have in my thoughts. Yes, I have a most ingenious device working in my head, from which I could promise myself glorious success, could I get rid of this obstacle which stands in my way. But here he comes. Now we shall see whether this passion of his keeps its ground still.

SCENE II.

LEANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

SIR, I've lost my labour, Trufaldin will not keep his word.

LEANDER. He has himself given me an account of the whole affair, but there is a good deal more in it; I have discovered that all this pretty story of being carried off by gypsies, of a grandee for her father, who is setting out for this place from Spain, is nothing but a trick, a tale which Lelius designed in order to prevent my getting possession of Celia.

MASCARIL. Do but see the roguery!

LEANDER. And yet for all this, Trufaldin is so possessed with this idle story, and swallows the bait of this shallow device so greedily, that he will not suffer himself to be undeceived.

MASCARIL. For this reason he'll watch her very narrowly for the future, and I see no room here to pretend to do any thing farther.

LEANDER. If this girl appeared to me at first

Most amiable, I now find her absolutely adorable; and I am ready to attempt every thing to make her my own: e'en to reverse her fortune, by plighting her my faith, and change her servile into matrimonial chains.

MASCARIL. Could you find in your heart to marry her?

LEANDER. I'm not absolutely determined: but in short, if her condition is something obscure, her graceful manner, and her virtue, are winning charms, which have an incredible force to attract all hearts.

MASCARIL. Her virtue, say you?

LEANDER. How! What's that you mutter? Go through with it, and explain yourself on that word virtue.

MASCARIL. Sir, you seem troubled; perhaps I had better be silent.

LEANDER. No, no, speak out.

MASCARIL. Well then, since you will have it, I am charitably disposed to help you to your eyesight again. This same wench——

LEANDER. Well, what of her? Proceed.

MASCARIL. Is far from being hard-hearted; in a corner she'll grant you a favour without a struggle for it; and after all, take my word for it, her heart is not made of flint, to any man who knows how to take her in the mood: she affects an air of innocence, indeed, and would pass for a recluse; but what I speak of her is upon sure grounds; you know it is something in my way of business to be a connoisseur in this kind of game.

LEANDER. What, Celia——

MASCARIL. The very same; her modesty is nothing but downright grimace, but the shadow of

virtue, which will never hold a siege, and which vanishes, as any body may be convinced, before the rays emitted from a purse.

LEANDER. Heavens! what dost thou tell me? shall I believe a discourse of this kind?

MASCARIL. Nay, Sir, it is no busines of mine, you know. No, pray don't believe me, pursue your design, take the fly jade, and marry her; the whole town, in a body, will return thanks for your public spirit; you marry the public good in her.

LEANDER. This is beyond expression surprizing!

MASCARIL aside.] He has nibbled the hook. Courage, Mascaril, if he does but swallow it in good earnest, we shall get rid of an ugly busines.

LEANDER. Yes, this surprizing account has thunder-struck me.

MASCARIL. I am surprized at you, Sir. How can you?—

LEANDER. Go to the post-house, and see whether there is any letter for me. [Alone, having mused a while.] Who would not have been deceived here? Never did the air of a face, if what he says be true, more impose upon the world.

S C E N E III.

LELIUS, LEANDER.

LELIUS.

WHAT may be the occasion of your looking so sad, Sir?

LEANDER. Who, I?

LELIUS. Yes, you.

LEANDER. Suppose I have no occasion at all.

LELIUS. I perceive well enough what it is, Celia is the cause of it.

LEANDER. My mind runs upon no such trifles.

LELIUS. For all that, you had formed some notable plots to compass her: but you must say so, since you have been disappointed in your views.

LEANDER. Were I fool enough to be enamour'd of her, I should laugh at all your plots to traverse it.

LELIUS. My plots? What plots, pray?

LEANDER. Lack-a-day, Sir, we know all.

LELIUS. All what?

LEANDER. Why, all your proceedings, from one end to t'other:

LELIUS. This is all Hebrew to me, I can't comprehend one tittle of it.

LEANDER. Pretend, if you please, not to understand me, but take my word for once, be under no manner of apprehensions about a possession, which I should be sorry so much as to dispute with you. I am for an unfulfilled beauty, not a cast-off miss.

LELIUS. Softly, softly, Leander.

LEANDER. Hoh! what, are you in earnest? Go, I tell you once more, and sneak after her without jealousy, you may call yourself a most lucky fellow. 'Tis true, her beauty is none of the commonest, but to make amends for that, the rest is common enough.

LELIUS. Leander, no more of this provoking language. You may endeavour as much as you please to get her from me, but I cannot hear her abused. Any injury offered to her I must and I will resent. She is my earthly deity; and it will

ever go much less against me to bear your rivalship, than the least word that touches her character.

LEANDER. What I advance here comes from very good hands.

LELIUS. Whoever told it you is a scoundrel, there's not a person living can cast the least blemish upon this dear creature, I know her very heart, it is the throne of virtue.

LEANDER. And yet I should imagine Mascaril is a very competent judge in such a cause as this; it was he past sentence upon her.

LELIUS. He?

LEANDER. He himself.

LELIUS. Does the insolent rascal pretend to scandalize a woman of honour, and think it possible too, I should make a laughing matter of it? A wager with you he denies it.

LEANDER. Done, that he does not.

LELIUS. 'Sdeath, I would cudgel him out of his life, should he dare to assert such lies to me.

LEANDER. And I would crop off his ears upon the spot, should he deny what he told me.

S C E N E IV.

LELIUS, LEANDER, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

O H! most lucky, there he is; come hither, ye curst cur.

MASCARIL. What's the matter?

LELIUS. Thou tongue of the serpent, teeming with imposture; dar'st thou spit thy venom at Celia? and slander the most consummate virtue that ever added lustre to misfortunes?

MASCARIL whispering Lelius.] Not so furious, this story was a contrivance of mine on set purpose.

LELIUS. No, no, none of your winking, and none of your jokes; I am blind and deaf to all that can be said or done: were it my own brother, he should pay dear for it; and to dare asperse what I adore, is wounding me in the most tender part: all those signs are made to no purpose; pray what have you been saying to this gentleman?

MASCARIL. Lord, Sir, let us not pick a quarrel, or else I shall e'en walk off.

LELIUS. You shan't stir a step.

MASCARIL. Oh!

LELIUS. Speak then! confess.

MASCARIL whispering Lelius.] Let me go, I tell you 'tis an artful stratagem.

LELIUS. Be quick; what was't you said? Decide this dispute betwixt us.

MASCARIL. I said what I said, pray don't put yourself in a passion.

LELIUS drawing his sword.] 'Sdeath! villain! I'll make you talk in another manner.

LEANDER stopping him.] Stay your hand a little, not quite so furious.

MASCARIL aside.] Was there ever such a blockhead?

LELIUS. Suffer me to discharge my just vengeance on him.

LEANDER. 'Tis assuming too much to pretend to beat him in my presence.

LELIUS. How! have I no right then to chastise my own servant?

LEANDER. How, your servant?

MASCARIL aside.] What, not done yet! he'll discover all.

LELIUS. Suppose I had a mind to thresh him to death, what then? he's my own servant.

LEANDER. He's mine at present.

LELIUS. That's an admirable joke! and how yours, pray?

LEANDER. Beyond all dispute—

MASCARIL whispering.] Will you not hold that confounded tongue of yours?

LELIUS. Heh! what wouldest thou be at?

MASCARIL aside.] Oh! the confounded block-head, to blow up my whole design! and not to comprehend any thing neither, whatever signs one makes to him!

LELIUS. You've strange whims, Leander, and want to impose them upon me. Is not he my servant?

LEANDER. Han't you discharged him your service for some misdemeanour?

LELIUS. I don't know what you mean.

LEANDER. And did you not in the violence of your fury beat him most unmercifully?

LELIUS. No such thing; I discharge him and cudgel him at that rate! You impose upon me, Leander, or he imposes upon you.

MASCARIL aside.] On, on, blunderer, you'll do your own business effectually.

LEANDER to Mascaril.] Then all this drubbing is purely imaginary?

MASCARIL. He knows not what he says; his memory—

LEANDER. No, no, all these signs don't look well in thee; I suspect some crafty piece of artifice here; but I forgive thee for the sake of the invention. 'Tis pretty sufficient for me, that he has undeceived me, so as to let me see for what

reason thou hadst put this trick upon me; and that I come off so cheap, when I had trusted myself to thy hypocritical care. This ought to be called, An advertisement to the reader. Adieu, Lelius, adieu.

SCENE V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

COURAGE, my brave boy! our prowess ever attends us; let us draw, and bravely take the field; let us a^t Olibrius, the murderer of the innocents.

LELIUS. He had accused thee of aspersing the character of —

MASCARIL. And you could not see through the artifice, and let him remain in his error, which made well for you, and which had pretty near wean'd him of his love? No, truly, he has an open soul, a stranger to dissimulation. With much ado, I had worm'd myself dextrously into his rival's favour; this trick had near given me possession of his mistress; he balks me of her by false alarms; I try to abate the warmth of his rival's passion, whip comes in my giddy-brains, and sets him agog again. In vain did I make signs to him, and shew'd him it was all design: it signifies nothing, he is deaf and blind to all hints and signs, and boldly pushes his point till he discovers the whole. Grand, and sublime effort of invention, which yields to no man's living! 'Tis an exquisite piece, and worthy,

in troth, to be made a prefent of to the king's cabinet!

LELIUS. I'm not surprized that you baffle your expectation; if I'm not acquainted with the designs you are setting on foot, I shall be for ever making mistakes.

MASCARIL. So much the worse.

LELIUS. At least, if you would be justly angry with me to some purpose, give me a little insight into your designs; but if I'm kept in the dark as to the spring of them, 'tis that's the reaon why I'm always caught napping.

MASCARIL. Ay! there lies all the mischief, 'tis that which ruins us: in troth, my worthy patron, I tell it you over and over, you will never be otherwise than an ass whilst there is breath in you.

LELIUS. Since the thing is done, let's think of it no more: my rival, however, will never be able to succeed against me, if you will but exert the endeavours which I know you are capable of.

MASCARIL. Let us drop this discourse, and talk of something else: I'm not so easily pacified, not I; I am in too great a passion for that; you must, in the first place do a good office for me, and we shall see afterwards whether I ought to undertake the management of your amours, or no.

LELIUS. If that be all it sticks at, I refuse nothing: what do you expect of me? My fword, my life, is ready for your service.

MASCARIL. What strange whims run in his head! You are just o'th' humour of those friends of the blade, whom one always finds more ready to draw their fword, than to produce a tester, when they should give it.

LELIUS. What is it I can do for thee then?

MASCARIL. Why, you must absolutely appease your father's anger.

LELIUS. Oh! that's done already; I am reconciled to him.

MASCARIL. May be so, but I am not: I kill'd him this morning for your sake: the very fancy of it shocks him; and these sort of feints are cruel strokes to such old fellows as he, which occasion the melancholy reflection, much against their will, on the state their condition borders upon. The good man, notwithstanding his age, loves life hugely, and can relish no joke upon that subject: he dreads the omen, and being enraged at me, they tell me he has enter'd an action against me. I'm afraid, if I am lodged at the expence of the king, that I may like it so well, after one quarter of an hour's acquaintance, that I shall hardly prevail on myself to quit the place ever after. There are a good many writs out against me, of pretty long standing; for, in short, virtue is never without envy, and is always persecuted in this vile age. Therefore go and make my peace with him.

LELIUS. Yes, we shall bring him to temper; but you promise at the same time——

MASCARIL. Well, well, we'll see what's to be done. [Exit Lelius.] Now for a little breath after so much fatigue; let us stop, for a while, the career of our intrigues, and not plague ourselves as if we were haunted; Leander, however, can't well hurt us for the present, Celia being detained——

SCENE VI.

ERGASTUS, MASCARIL.

ERGASTUS.

I Was looking for you, high and low, to do you a piece of service, by giving you information about a secret which greatly concerns you.

MASCARIL. What is it?

ERGASTUS. Are we alone? Can no one hear us?

MASCARIL. None at all.

ERGASTUS. We are friends, as much as two people can be: I am acquainted with all thy projects, and with thy master's passion: look sharp about you by and by: Leander intends to carry off Celia, and I am informed that he has made a proper disposition of every thing, and that he flatters himself he shall find admission into Trufaldin's house in masquerade, having understood that at this season the women of the neighbourhood very often pay visits, in the evening, in masks.

MASCARIL. Yes, a word to the wife; he's not yet in full possession, I may happen by and by to spring the game before him; and as to this thrust, I have a stratagem in my head, that I fancy will disappoint him of his aim: he's not aware of the singular gifts heaven has enriched me with: good by'e, we'll take a pint together next time we meet.

SCENE VII.

MASCARIL alone.

WE must, we must reap all the benefit to ourselves, from this amorous intrigue, that the thing will possibly admit of; and by a dextrous, uncommon turn, endeavour to make the success our own, without running the risk of any of the bad consequences. If I mask so as to get the start of him, Leander will certainly have no reason to triumph over us; and there, if we take the prize, before he comes up, he'll defray the charges of the expedition; because his project having already, in some measure, taken wind, the suspicion will always fall on his side: and we, being covered from the pursuit of the enemy, shall need give ourselves no concern as to the consequences of this dangerous attack: this it is to keep out of the scrape of ostentation, and hook out the chestnuts with the cat's paw. I'll immediately go and mask myself, with two or three honest friends of my acquaintance, for there's not a moment to be lost. I know where puss is squat, and can easily furnish myself with men and tackle, in the turn of a hand. Depend upon't, I put my dexterity to its proper use: if heaven has distributed to me my portion in knavery, I am none of your degenerate spirits who conceal the talents they have received.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, ERGASTUS.

LELIUS.

SO you say he intends to carry her off in masquerade?

ERGASTUS. There is nothing more certain; one of the company having informed me of this design, I ran instantly to Mascalil, and told him all the affair, who is gone, as he said, to disappoint this party by a scheme which his faithful brain suggested to him in an instant: and as I have accidentally met you here, I thought it my duty to acquaint you with the whole.

LELIUS. I am exceedingly obliged to you for this news; go, I shan't forget this honest piece of service. [Exit Ergastus.] My droll rascal will, I warrant you, play them some trick or other: but I have a mind on my part to second his design: it shall never be said, that, in a business which so nearly concerns me, I should stir no more than a post; 'tis about the time, they'll be surprized at sight of me: pox! why did I not think of bringing somebody along with me for a second? But come, and oppose me who dare, I've a case of good pistols, and my sword is true—So ho! within there; a word with you, if you please.

S C E. N. E. IX.

TRUFALDIN at his window, LELIUS.

WHAT is the matter? who is there?

LELIUS. I am come to advise you to fasten your doors carefully to-night.

TRUFALDIN. For what reason?

LELIUS. There are certain sparks coming in masques, who intend to come in serenade, to carry of Celia.

TRUFALDIN. Heavens!

LELIUS. And they'll infallibly be here in a very short time: keep where you are, you may see the whole transaction from your window: hey! what did I say? don't you discern them already? hift—— you shall see me affront them; we shall have admirable sport, if our line don't break.

S C E. N. E. X.

LELIUS, TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL
and his company masqu'd.

TRUFALDIN.

ARE these the pleasant blades that think to play me a trick?

LELIUS. You that are masqued, whither so fast? May one be let into the secret? Trufaldin, pray open to these gentry that they may have a mumming bout. [To Mascaril, disguised as a woman.] Lord, what a pretty creature we have got here! how genteel her air! how now! do you

grumble! but without offence, may one remove the masque, and see that handsome face of your's?

TRUFALDIN. Hence, ye knaves, ye villains, be gone, ye raggamuffins—And you, Sir, good night, and many thanks for this discovery.

SCENE XI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MLELIUS seeing Mascaril unmasq'd.
MASCARIL, is it thee?

MASCARIL. No, marry is it not, 'tis somebody else.

LELIUS. Alas! what a shock is this! how hard is my fortune! could I possibly guess this, having no notice of the private reasons which had disguised thee? what an unlucky dog am I, unwittingly to play thee this trick, by prying too curiously under the masque! Now, have I as good a mind, in the just heat of my passion, to drub myself, or give myself a thousand lashes!

MASCARIL. Adieu, thou nonpareil of wits! thou master-piece of discernment and contrivance!

LELIUS. Unfortunate! if thy passion bereaves me of thy succour, what guardian angel can I invoke?

MASCARIL. Why, seignior Belzebub.

LELIUS. Ah! if thy heart is not insensible as brass or steel, once more, at least, excuse this unlucky imprudcence; if to gain this boon 'tis necessary I should kiss thy feet; behold me—

MASCARIL. Tol, lol, de rol: come, comrades, let's away. I hear some company who are just at our heels.

SCENE XII.

LEANDER, and his company masqu'd.
TRUFALDIN at his window.

SOFTLY there, let us not make a noise.

TRUFALDIN. How's this! Is my door to be beset all night with revellers? Gentlemen, pray don't take cold in your pleasures; heads that are turn'd this way, have leisure enough without doubt. 'Tis somewhat too late to take Celia along with you; excuse her for this night, she intreats you would: the dear girl is a-bed, and can't speak to you; I'm heartily sorry for you: but to refresh you under the great pains you are at for her sake, she presents you with this pot of essence.

LEANDER. Phogh! what a stink is here! I'm all besmear'd. Let's begone, comrades; we are discovered. Zounds! what a pickle I am in.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

LELIUS discovered like an Armenian, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WELL, you are bundled up after a most ridiculous fashion indeed.

LELIUS. Thou hast revived my dying hopes by this contrivance.

MASCARIL. My passion's always too soon over;

'tis in vain to swear and make protestations, I can never stand to them.

LELIUS. In return, be assured, if I ever have it in my power, I'll be grateful to thy heart's content, and though I had but one morsel of bread—

MASCARIL. Enough: bend all your thoughts to the new design we have on foot; however, if you commit any blunder, you can't lay the mis-carriage upon surprize any more; your part in this play ought to be had perfectly by heart.

LELIUS. But how did Trufaldin receive thee at his house?

MASCARIL. I imposed upon the good fire with a pretended concern for him; I went with great earnestness to inform him, that unless he look'd well about him there were people who would surprize him; that they took their aim, and from more than one quarter too, at her, of whose birth a preparatory letter had made a sham discovery; that they had a great mind to have drawn me in for a share in the business, but that I slipt my neck out of the collar; and that as I had a great concern for his interest, I came to give him this timely notice, that he might be prepared. Then, moralising, I made a solemn discourse upon the numbers of wicked people one sees every day here below; that, as for my part, being tired with the world, and the vile life I had lived in it, I was desirous to take some pains for the good of my soul, to retire from all hurry, and to spend the rest of my days in peace with some worthy good man; that if he thought well of it, I should desire nothing more than to spend the rest of my life in his family; and that also he had gained upon my affections so far, that, without asking a farthing of wages to serve him, I

would place in his hands, as knowing it safe there, some small matter my father had left me, and what I had got in service; which, if it pleased heaven to take me hence, I was fully determined should be his. This was the true way to come at his heart; and that your mistress and you might compare notes together, what course you are to take to bring your matters to bear, I was willing you should have a private interview; he himself has contrived to open me a way, which is pleasant enough, to bring you fairly and openly to her lodgings; happening to talk to me about a son of his that's dead, and whom, in a dream last night, he saw come to life again: upon this occasion you shall hear the story he told me, and upon which I've just now form'd our stratagem.

LELIUS. Enough, I know it all; thou hast told it me twice already.

MASCARIL. Yes, yes, but should I tell it thrice, it may happen still, that your wit, with all its sufficiency, may be out in some circumstances.

LELIUS. But this is losing time——

MASCARIL. Poh! pray not quite so fast, for fear we should happen to trip. You've a noddle, do ye see, that's somewhat of the thickest: you should be perfectly well instructed in this same adventure: 'tis a considerable time since Trufaldin left Naples, he then called himself Zanobio Ruberti. A certain party that rais'd a civil commotion, of which he was only suspected by the city, (in fact he's not a man to disturb any state) obliged him to leave the town privately by night. A daughter of his very young, and his wife, being left behind, he received the news some time after of their being both dead; and under this great affliction, being

desirous to carry along with him to some other town not only his effects, but also the only hope left of his family, a young son of his, bred a scholar, whose name was Horatio; he writ to Bologna, where, for his greater improvement, a certain tutor, nam'd Albert, had the education of the youth: but though time and place were settled for their meeting, two whole years pass'd without seeing any thing of them; insomuch that, after so long time believing them dead, he came to this city, where he took the name he now bears, without ever discovering the least tidings either of this Albert or his son Horatio, for twelve long years. This then is the substance of his story, only repeated over again, in order to impress it more strongly on your memory. Now, you're to be an Armenian merchant, who have seen them both safe and found in Turkey. If I've trumped up this expedient of bringing them to life again, rather than any other, according to his dream, 'tis because in cases of adventures, 'tis the commonest thing in the world to see people taken at sea by some corsair of Turkey, and afterwards restored to their families in the very nick of time, after having been thought lost for fifteen or twenty years. For my part, I've seen a hundred of this kind of stories; let us make use of one of them, which will stand us in good stead without racking our brains farther. You are to have heard the story of their being made slaves, and to have furnish'd them with money to redeem themselves; but having set out before them upon urgent business, Horatio gave you in charge to visit his father here, whose circumstances he had learn'd, and with whom you were to stay till their

arrival. You have now your lesson, if you can but remember it.

LELIUS. These repetitions are superfluous. I comprehended the whole business at first hearing.

MASCARIL. I will go to his house, and strike the first stroke.

LELIUS. Hark'e, Mascaril, there's only one point perplexes me; suppose he should ask me to describe his son's person?

MASCARIL. A pretty thing to puzzle about! Should you not know that he was very little when he saw him? And then besides, mayn't length of time and slavery have greatly changed him?

LELIUS. 'Tis true. But pray, if he should remember he has seen me, what must I do then?

MASCARIL. What, have you lost your memory? I told you but just now, that (besides his only having a transient view of you could make no great impression, not having seen you above a minute) both your beard and your dress would alter you sufficiently.

LELIUS. Very well. But now I think of it; what part of Turkey?—

MASCARIL. 'Tis equal I tell you, Turkey or Barbáry.

LELIUS. But the name of the city I saw them in?

MASCARIL. Tunis. He'll keep me all day, I think; repeating it so often is needless, says he, and yet I've repeated the town's name to him a dozen times already.

LELIUS. Well, well, in and prepare matters.

MASCARIL. At least be cautious, and conduct yourself wisely. Let's have none of your inventions here.

LELIUS. Let me alone for management. Trust to me, I say, once more.

MASCARIL. Horatio, a student at Bologna, Trufaldin, Zanobio Ruberti, a citizen of Naples. The tutor one Albert.—

LELIUS. Pr'ythee have done with such preaching to me; do'st thou take me for a blockhead?

MASCARIL. Not a compleat one; but really something a little bordering upon it.

S C E N E II.

LELIUS alone.

WHEN I've no occasion for this rogue, he cringes like a spaniel; but now, because he very well knows what assistance he gives me, sets no bounds to his insolence. — I am now going into the full sunshine of those bright eyes, whose power has imposed upon me so delightful a servitude: I am now going, without hindrance, to paint, in the most glowing colours, the torments of my heart: I shall then know what doom — But here they come.

S C E N E III.

TRUFALDIN, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

TRUFALDIN.

THANKS, gracious heav'n! for this favourable turn of my fortune.

MASCARIL. You are the man who should see visions, and dream dreams; since in you 'tis false that dreams are falsehoods.

TRUFALDIN to Lelius.] What thanks, what satisfaction shall I give you, Sir? You whom I ought to stile the good angel of my happiness?

LELIUS. This concern is needless, I freely discharge you.

TRUFALDIN to Mascaril.] If I am not greatly mistaken, I have seen a face somewhat resembling this Armenian.

MASCARIL. That's what I was saying; but one often sees two faces alike.

TRUFALDIN. You have really seen this son of mine, on whom I rest all my hopes?

LELIUS. Yes, Signior Trufaldin, I have seen him, and left him in good health.

TRUFALDIN. He gave you the history of his life, and spoke much about me?

LELIUS. More than ten thousand times.

MASCARIL aside to Lelius.] Something less, I'm apt to believe.

LELIUS. He described you, just as I see you; your face, your air—

TRUFALDIN. Lord bless me! How can that be? Why, the sweet boy was but seven years old when he saw me last; and his tutor himself, after so long time, would have much ado to know my face.

MASCARIL. One's own flesh and blood preserves this image in a surprizing manner; this likeness is imprinted in lines so strong, that my father—

TRUFALDIN. Enough—where was it you left him?

LELIUS. In Turky at Turin.

TRUFALDIN. Turin? But that town, I think, is in Piedmont.

MASCARIL aside.] Oh the numbskull! [To Trufaldin.] — You misunderstood him; he means Tunis; and it was in reality there he left your son: but the Armenians have all, through custom, a particular vicious pronunciation, harsh enough to other nations; and that is, that in all their words they change a *nis* into a *rin*; for instance, instead of saying Tunis, they pronounce Turin.

TRUFALDIN. It was necessary to be let into this, to understand him—What way did he direct you to meet with his father?

MASCARIL aside.] See if the oaf has one word to answer! [To Trufaldin, after pretending to fence.] I was just practising a lesson at small-sword; formerly there were few who could match me at that diversion; and I've play'd a foil in many and many a fencing-school.

TRUFALDIN to Mascaril.] That's not the thing I want to know at present—[To Lelius.] What other name did he say I might have?

MASCARIL. Ah! Signior Zanubio Ruberti, what joy heaven now sends you!

LELIUS. That's your true name: the other is only feigned.

TRUFALDIN. But where did he tell you he was born?

MASCARIL. Naples seems a most agreeable place of abode; but for your part, it ought to be your utter aversion.

TRUFALDIN. Can't thou not hold thy prattling, and let us go on with our discourse?

LELIUS. Naples is the place where he first drew his breath.

TRUFALDIN. Where did I send him in his infancy? and under whose tuition?

MASCARIL. That poor Albert deserves highly of you, for having accompanied your son from Bologna, to whose discretion your fatherly care had committed him.

TRUFALDIN. Pshaw!—

MASCARIL aside.] We are undone if this conversation lasts long.

TRUFALDIN. I would be glad to hear their adventures from your mouth: aboard what vessel

providence, which ordered things so happily—

MASCARIL. I don't know what ails me, but I do nothing but yawn; but, Signior Trufaldin, do you consider that, probably, this gentleman stranger may want some refreshment? besides, it grows late.

LELIUS. No refreshment for me.

MASCARIL. Oh! Sir, you're more hungry than you imagine.

TRUFALDIN. Please to walk in then.

LELIUS. After you.

MASCARIL to Trufaldin.] Sir, in Armenia the master of the house shews his guests the way. [To Lelius, after Trufaldin is gone into the house.] You, poor mortal, what not two words?

LELIUS. I was a little surprized at first; but 'en't any longer concern'd, I have rally'd my spirits, and am going to rattle away boldly—

MASCARIL. Here comes our rival, who knows nothing of our scheme.

[They go into Trufaldin's house.

SCENE IV.

ANSELM, LEANDER.

ANSELM.

STAY, Leander, and hear from me a thing which concerns your honour and repose. I speak not as the father of my daughter, as a man interested for my own family; but as your own father, solicitous for your welfare, without a design of flattering, or imposing upon you in any thing; in short, with an open and honest heart, as I would wish every one should deal with my own flesh and blood, in the like case. Are you sensible with what eye every body regards this amour of yours, which, in one night's time has been blaz'd all about town? To what tittle-tattle and sneers your last night's adventure has been every where exposed? What judgment people form of that capricious choice, which, say they, has pitch'd upon a person for a wife, who is an outcast of Egypt, a strolling wench, whose noble employment is only the trade of a beggar! I really blush'd for you, even more than I did for myself, who find myself involved here in this scandalous uproar; myself, I say, whose daughter, being promised you in marriage, cannot bear a slight upon her, without being affronted at it. For shame, Leander, quit these mean-spirited ways; open your eyes a little; if none of us are wise at all times, yet the shortest errors are always the best: when a man has no portion with his wife, but beauty only, repentance is at the heels of wedlock; and the most lovely wife has but a weak defence against the indifference

which succeeds enjoyment: I tell it you once more, these fervent transports, youthful ardours, and exstasies, may furnish us out a few agreeable nights at first; but this bliss is by no means lasting, and, our passion abating its speed after luscious nights, gives us but nauseous days; then succeed cares, anxieties, miseries, the loss of parental affection, and the dissolution of every tender tye of nature.

LEANDER. Through your whole discourse, I've heard not a word which my own mind has not represented to me already. I know how much I'm indebted for the great honour you design me, and of which I am not worthy; and see, in spite of all opposition my passion may give me, how great your daughter's worth and virtue is; I am therefore resolved to use my utmost endeavours to—

ANSELM. Somebody opens this door, let's retire to some distance, for fear some secret contagion proceed from it, that may seize you at unawares.

S C E N E V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WE shall presently be discovered, if you persist in these palpable blunders.

LELIUS. Am I eternally to hear these reprimands of thine? what can't thou complain of? have I not succeeded in every thing I said since—

MASCARIL. So, so: witness the Turks, whom you call'd heretics, and whom you swore worshipped the sun and moon. Let that pass: what frets me beyond measure, is, that your love, when with

Celia, makes you strangely forget yourself: 'tis just like boiling pap, which, by too fierce a fire, swells, mounts up to the brim, and runs over all around.

LELIUS. Could one force one's self to a more thorough reserve? I hardly spoke to her.

MASCARIL. Right; but 'tis not enough, not to speak; by your gestures, during the short time of supper, you gave greater reason for suspicion than other people would have done in a whole twelve-month.

LELIUS. And how so?

MASCARIL. How so? why every one might perceive it. At table, where Trufaldin would force her to sit down, you never kept your eyes off her, blush'd, were out of countenance, and ogled, without minding what people said to you; you were never thirsty but when she drank; and greedily seized the glass whilst in her hands, without rinsing it, or throwing a drop of it away, you drank her leavings, and seem'd to affect that side of the glass which she had carry'd to her lips; you laid your paw as quick upon every morsel of bread her fine hand had touch'd, or her teeth intended, as a cat would do upon a mouse. Then, besides all this, you kept a perpetual noise of tic-tac, with your feet under the table; with which Trufaldin happening to have two kicks, something of the hardest, twice punish'd two innocent curs, who would have snarl'd at you, if they durst; and yet you will pretend to say you behaved very circumspectly. For my part, my body was upon the rack, notwithstanding the cold season, I sweat again with the pain I was in for you; I kept my eyes perpetually upon you, and endeavoured to give

you the proper items, by a thousand distortions of my face and body.

LELIUS. Lack-a-day, how easy it is to condemn a thing of which you don't feel the enchanting cause! I've a good mind, nevertheless, (once to humour thee) to put a force upon that love, which, at other times, I must obey: henceforward—

SCENE VI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL, TRUFALDIN.

MASCARIL.

WE were just talking over the variety of your son's adventures.

TRUFALDIN to Lelius.] It was kindly done. In the mean time, will you grant me the favour of only one word with him there in private?

LELIUS. By all means, Sir, I must be very inconsiderate if I should not.

[Lelius goes into Trufaldin's house.

SCENE VII.

TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

TRUFALDIN.

DOST thou know what I've been doing?

MASCARIL. No; but certainly, if you think proper, I shan't remain long in ignorance.

TRUFALDIN. From a large sturdy oak, of near two hundred years standing, I have now cut off an admirable branch, cull'd out for the purpose, of a reasonable thickness; of which, with great eagerness, upon the spot, I made a cudgel, near about—

Yes, about this largeness, [shewing his arm] a little taper towards one end; but, as I take it, worth a hundred faplins, to belabour the shoulders withal; for it fills the hand well, is knotty, and massy.

MASCARIL. But for whom, I beseech you, is all this preparation?

TRUFALDIN. For thyself, first of all; then, secondly, for that pious missioner who would palm one person upon me, and trick me out of another; for this Armenian, this merchant in disguise, introduc'd with the bait of a counterfeit story.

MASCARIL. How! don't you believe?—

TRUFALDIN. Nay, don't go about to excuse it; he himself, by good luck, discover'd his own cheat, in telling Celia, whilst he squeezed her hand at the same time, that 'twas for her sake alone he came disguis'd in this manner. He didn't mind my little god-daughter Jenny, who heard every word he said. I make no doubt on't, though he happened not to mention it, but thou art the curs'd accomplice in all this.

MASCARIL. Indeed, you do me great injustice. If you are really abus'd, believe me, he impos'd first upon me with this story.

TRUFALDIN. Would you convince me you speak truth, second my blows, and drive him away; let's give the rascal a sound drubbing, thence-forward I quit thee of all share in the crime.

MASCARIL. Ay, ay, with all my soul. I'll dust his jacket for him purely; and by that you shall see I am none of his accomplice. [Aside.] Ah! Mr. Armenian, you shall have a drubbing-bout, for a marr-all, as you always are.

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

TRUFALDIN to Lelius, after having knock'd at his door.

A WORD with you, pray: so, Mr. Bite, you've the assurance now to impose on an honest gentleman, and make your game of him, heh?

MASCARIL. To pretend to have seen his son in another country, only to get the more easily into his family!

TRUFALDIN beating Lelius.] I'll pay you, I'll be even with you prefently.

LELIUS to Mascaril, who beats him likewise.] Oh! the scoundrel!

MASCARIL. These are the wages that sharpers—

LELIUS. Villain!

MASCARIL. Are serv'd here. Keep that for my sake.

LELIUS. How then! Am I to be—

MASCARIL beating him, and driving him off.] March off, be gone, I tell you, or I shall break all your bones.

TRUFALDIN. This pleases me to the life, come in, I'm thoroughly satisfy'd.

[Mascaril follows Trufaldin into his house.

LELIUS returning.] This to me! this glaring affront by a servant! Could one have thought the villain would have behav'd thus, to proceed thus insolently to abuse his master?

MASCARIL, from Trufaldin's window.] May one ask, without offence, how fare your shoulders?

LELIUS. What! hast thou the impudence to prate to me still in that manner?

MASCARIL. Now you see what it is not to mind little Jenny, and to have a babbling tongue always, without discretion; but this time I'm not angry with you, I've done scolding and swearing at you; though the folly of the action is complete, yet my hand has expiated the fault upon thy shoulders.

LELIUS. Depend upon it, I will be amply revenged for this undutiful assault.

MASCARIL. You yourself have brought all this mischief upon your own head.

LELIUS. I?

MASCARIL. Had you not been a shallow-brains, when you were talking heedlessly to your idol, you would have perceiv'd Jenny behind you, who listened to every word you said.

LELIUS. Could any body possibly catch one word I spoke to Celia?

MASCARIL. And whence else could proceed this kicking you out o'doors all of a sudden? Yes, you're shut out by your own tittle-tattle: I don't know whether you play often at picquet, but you have an admirable knack at discarding.

LELIUS. Oh! most unfortunate of all wretches! But why again must I be turned out by thee?

MASCARIL. I had no other way of clearing myself of all suspicion of being author or accomplice in this piece of artifice.

LELIUS. You should therefore, for your share, have laid me on more gently.

MASCARIL. What an ass! Why, Trufaldin leer'd at us most narrowly: and then I must tell

you, under this pretence of serving you, I was not at all displeas'd to vent my spleen; in short, the thing is over, and if you will promise me to lay aside all thoughts of revenge against me, I promise you, by the assistance of the post I am in, to complete your wishes, before two nights more pass over your head.

LELIUS. Though thy treatment of me was the most shocking, yet what would not such a promise prevail upon me to do?

MASCARIL. You promise it then?

LELIUS. Yes, I do promise it.

MASCARIL. But this is not all yet: promise that you will never meddle or interfere in any of my schemes..

LELIUS. Well, I promise that too.

MASCARIL. If you are tardy, may a quartan ague——

LELIUS. But be as good as thy word with me, and contrive how to make me easy.

MASCARIL. Go throw off your habit, and 'oint your back a little:

LELIUS alone.] Must that ill-fortune, which is constantly at my heels, always present me with disgrace upon disgrace?

MASCARIL, coming out of Trufaldin's house.] What? not gone yet? hence immediately; but, of all things, take special care not to take any care at all, since I'm o' your side, let that satisfy you; don't stir a foot by way of helping me forward; be quiet, and patiently wait the issue.

LELIUS going.] Yes, yes, about thy business; I'll stick to that.

MASCARIL alone.] Now let me see what course I am next to steer..

SCENE IX.

ERGASTUS, MASCARIL.

ERGASTUS.

MASCARIL, I come to inform you of a thing, which will give a cruel blow to thy projects; there is this instant arriv'd a young gypsy, who nevertheless is no black, and appears much like a gentleman, with a very pale-fac'd old woman, and is to call upon Trusaldin to repurchase the slave you are so busy'd to get away. He seems to be very eager for her.

MASCARIL. Doubtless, 'tis the lover Celia spoke of. Were ever people's fortunes so perplex'd as ours are? No sooner clear of one incumbrance, but we fall into another. In vain do we learn that Leander is upon the point of quitting the cause, and giving us no farther trouble; that his father being arriv'd, has, contrary to expectation, turn'd the balance on the side of Hippolyta: that he has made a thorough change of affairs by his authority; and is going this very day to conclude the marriage treaty; when one rival withdraws, another more plaguy one comes, to deprive us of all our poor remains of hope. Nevertheless, by a surprizing cast of my art, I believe I shall be able to stop their journey for a while, and gain as much time, as will be necessary to attempt the finishing stroke to this tedious affair. A great robbery has been lately committed, by whom nobody knows. These gypsies are seldom reckoned so honest as they should be; I'll dexterously procure this fellow's imprisonment for a few days, upon a frivolous suspi-

cion. I know some griping officers of justice, who are always deliberately prepared for such jobbs as these, with the greedy hope of some small present: there's nothing, in their way, that they will not attempt blindfold; however innocent the person be, if he has a good purse, it is sufficient to treat him as if he was guilty.



ACT V. SCENE I.

MASCARIL, ERGASTUS.

MASCARIL.

A STUPID cur! a cur of all curs! must we be everlastingly plagued with thee?

ERGASTUS. By the great care of the constable every thing went smoothly: the wag was just coop'd, had not your master himself come in upon them that very instant, like a madman as he was, and utterly spoil'd thy plot: I cannot bear it, cries he, with an haughty air, that an honest gentleman should be drag'd away in this disgraceful manner; I answ're for him, from his very looks, and will be his bail: and as they made some resistance rather than let go their man, presently he charg'd the Myrmidons, who are a sort of people much afraid of their carcases, so vigorously, that they took to their heels as if the devil was after them.

MASCARIL. The booby don't dream now that this gypsy is already got there to Trufaldin's house, to carry off his mistress.

ERGASTUS. Good b'ye, a certain business obliges me to leave thee.

SCENE II.

MASCARIL alone.

YES; this last monstrous accident has absolutely stunned me; one would think, and for my part I'm clear in the matter, that this pragmatical devil, with which he's possess'd, takes delight in making me mad, and hurries him into every place where his presence can do mischief. Yet for all this, I'm determin'd to see it out, and, spite of all these strokes, try who shall carry the day, this Demon, or myself: Celia has no aversion to him, and looks upon her departure with regret: I must endeavour to make my ends of this: but here they come; now for the execution. This well-furnished house here is at my beck, I can dispose of it here with great freedom; if fortune say the word, all will go well; nobody but myself governs there, and I keep the key. Strange! what a number of adventures have befallen us in a short time! and what variety of shapes is a sharper obliged to put on!

SCENE III.

CELIA, ANDER.

ANDER.

YOU know, Celia, there is nothing my heart has left undone, to testify the excess of its passion: when I was but very young, my courage in the wars gain'd me considerable esteem amongst the Venetians, and I might, one time or other,

without flattering myself, have pretended to some employment of distinction, by continuing in their service: when lo, I forgot every thing for your sake, and the direct consequence of a disguise in dress, which follow'd the sudden change you made in my heart, was to prevail upon your lover to join himself to your gang; nor has it been in the power of a thousand accidents, or even of your indifference, to break that inseparable attachment, which makes me for ever yours: since that, being, by an accident, parted from you for a much longer season than I could have foreseen, I've lost no time, and spar'd no pains to find you out again: in short, having found out the old gypsy woman, and, full of impatience, made myself acquainted with your birth, that for a certain sum, which was then of great service to them, and which prevented the ruin of your whole band, you were left as a pledge in these parts; I flew on the wings of love to break these chains of servitude, and to receive from you whatever commands you are pleased to give; and here, at the same time, I find you penive and melancholy, when your eyes ought to have sparkled with joy; if a retreat has any thing in it can allure you, I have sufficient at Venice, of the spoils taken in war, for us both to live on there: but if I must still follow you as before, you've my consent, and my heart shall have no ambition, but to serve you in whatever quality you please.

CELLIA. Your great affection for me discovers itself most clearly; and I must be very ungrateful not to be sensible of it. The disturbance in my countenance does by no means speak the sense of my heart on this occasion. A violent head-ach has seized me, and if I had the least influence up-

on you, our voyage should be suspended for three, or four days, till this indisposition had taken another turn.

ANDER. Defer it as long as you think fit, my whole wish is to please you: let us see for a house where you may live at ease: hoh! here's a bill up.

SCENE IV.

C E L I A, A N D E R, M A S C A R I L
disguis'd like a Swiss.

M R. Swiss, are you master of this house?

MASCARIL. Yes, Sir, me be, at your serfice.

ANDER. May we lodge here, pray?

MASCARIL. Yes, me have de very good shambers; ready furnish for stranger, but me no loge bad peoples.

ANDER. I suppose your house is clear of all suspicion.

MASCARIL. Me see by your face, you be stranger in this town.

ANDER. I am so.

MASCARIL. Matame be shee marry'd to you?

ANDER. Sir?

MASCARIL. Be she your wife, or your sister?

ANDER. Neither.

MASCARIL. Inteed she be very pritty; you come for marshandise, or, perhaps, for suè in de court of shustice for your own: law-suit be one very bad ting, it come so dear; de solicitor de tief, and de counselor de great knave.

ANDER. 'Tis not for that, neither.

MASCARIL. You bring dis lady den for come take de walk, and see de city?

ANDER to Celia.] No matter what: I'll be with you again in a moment; I'll go fetch the old gentlewoman presently and countermand our baggage which was ready.

MASCARIL. Matame, be she not vel?

ANDER. She has got the head-ach.

MASCARIL. Me have de very good vine, and de good cheese; walk in, walk in to my litel ouse.

[Celia, Ander, and Mascaril go into the house.

S. C. E. N. E. V.

LELIUS alone.

NOtwithstanding the eager transports of my heart prompt me every instant to action, in order to regain the fair one I love, yet my word obliges me to rest in expectation; to let another work for me, and see, without daring to stir, how heaven will dispose of my destiny.

S. C. E. N. E. VI.

ANDER, LELIUS.

LELIUS to Ander, coming out of the house.

WAS you inquiring for any body in this dwelling?

ANDER. 'Tis a ready furnish'd lodging, which I have hir'd but just now.

LELIUS. The house for all that belongs to my father, and my servant lies there o' nights to take care of it.

ANDER. I know nothing of that; but the bill shews it to be let—Read it.

LELIUS. Very true, this surprizes me, I confess: who the deuce could put it there? and to what purpose?—Hoh! faith, I guess, pretty near, what it means: this can't possibly proceed from any other quarter than what I conjecture.

ANDER. May one be so bold as to ask the reason?

LELIUS. I would not reveal it to any one else; but for you, it can be of no consequence, and you will be cautious how you speak of it: without doubt, the bill you see there, as far as I can guess, at least, can't be otherwife than an invention of the servant I am speaking of; nothing but an intricate knot, which should be of his knitting, to put into my hands a certain young gypsy, with whom I am smitten, and must gain her: I've hitherto been disappointed, though I have made several attempts to get her into my power.

ANDER. What is her name?

LELIUS. Celia.

ANDER. Ha! what say you?—If you had mentioned a syllable of this before, I could have sav'd you all the trouble this project might cost you.

LELIUS. How so? do you know her?

ANDER. 'Tis I who have just now redeem'd her.

LELIUS. You surprize me!

ANDER. Her health not admitting of our leaving this place, I had just plac'd her in the lodgings you see; and I am exceedingly glad on this occasion, that you have let me into your design.

LELIUS. How! shall I obtain the happiness I hope for, by your means? could you——

ANDER going to knock at the door.] You shall instantly be satisfy'd.

LELIUS. How shall I speak my gratitude? and what thanks—

ANDER. You owe me none, and I'll have none.

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, ANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL-aside.

SO H! don't I see there my hair-brains of a master? He'll play us again some blunder.

LELIUS. In this grotesque dress who could have known him? Come hither, Mascaril, you're welcome.

MASCARIL. Me be a man of honour, me no Maquerel*, me never debaush one wife, one dauter.

LELIUS. What an odd devil he is with his jargon!

MASCARIL. You go about you busineſſ, and no make your laſ o' me.

LELIUS. Come, come, away with your masque, and know your master.

MASCARIL. Begar, me never knew you.

LELIUS. All matters are accommodated, disguise thyſelf no longer.

MASCARIL. If you no marsh off, me give you one gran flap o' de cheeks.

LELIUS. Thy Swiss jargon is needless, I tell thee, for we are agreed, and his generosity obliges me. I have every thing thy heart could wish, and

* This is a play of words, Maquerel, in French, signifying a pimp.

there's no reason for thee to be under any farther apprehensions.

MASCARIL. Well, if that is the case, I'll un-Swiss myself and be Mascaril again.

ANDER. This valet of yours shews a great zeal for your service; please to stay a little, I'll return to you presently.

S C E N E VIII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

HOW now, Mascaril, what hast thou to say next?

MASCARIL. That I'm in raptures to see our labours are likely to end so happily.

LELIUS. You made great scruple, truly, of quitting your disguise, and could hardly credit me in this event.

MASCARIL. As I knew you pretty well, I had some terrors upon me; and I must still own the adventure is surprizing enough.

LELIUS. But, confess, however, that I have done something now; at least, I've made amends for my miscarriages by this master-piece, and I shall have the honour to give a finishing stroke to the work.

MASCARIL. Be it so. Fools have luck; that is all I shall say.

SCENE IX.

CELIA, ANDER, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

ANDER.

IS not this the beloved person you were speaking of to me?

LELIUS. Heavens! what happiness can be equal to mine!

ANDER. I must confess I am greatly indebted to you for the favour you've done me, did not I acknowledge it, I should be very ungrateful: but in short, the favour would be hardly earn'd, were I to repay it at the price of my heart. Judge in the transports her beauty gives me, whether I ought to discharge my debt at such an expence; you are generous yourself, yet you would not do the like. Farewel. For a few days, let us return from whence we came.

SCENE X.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL, after singing some time.

I SING, and at the same time I have little inclination to't; every thing is agreed between this gentleman and me, he gives me up Celia: hem! you understand me, Sir!

LELIUS. 'Tis too much, I am determin'd to ask no more assistance, since 'tis thrown away upon me; I'm a puppy, a traitor, a detestable block-head, unworthy of your fidelity for my service: go, cease attempting any thing for an ill contriv'd mor-

tal, who won't suffer any person to make him happy; after so many mischances, and so much folly, death should be the only assistant left me.

SCENE XI.

MASCARIL alone.

THAT's true enough, hang yourself, and that will crown all your follies. But in vain does his indignation against his sins committed, urge him to discharge me from all care, or attempts to support him; I'm resolv'd, be he what he will, to help him in spite of him; and that devil that's in him: greater the opposition, greater the glory; and difficulties are but a kind of tire-women, who deck and adorn virtue.

SCENE XII.

CElia, MASCARIL.

CElia to Mascaril, who had been whispering to her:
 SAY what you will, and propose what one can,
 I have no great expectation from this delay; the success we have seen hitherto, may sufficiently convince one, that they are not as yet in any likelihood of coming to agreement: and I have told you already that a heart formed as mine is, will not, for the sake of one, do injustice to another; and that I find myself strongly attach'd, by different ties, to both parties; if Lelius has love and riches on his side, Ander has gratitude for his share, which will not permit me even in the most secret thought, ever to consult any thing against

his interests: yes, if he has no more a place in my soul, if the gift of my heart must not crown his love, at least I owe this reward to what he has done for me, not to chuse another in contempt of his constancy; and that I should offer the same violence to my own inclinations, as I do to his, of which he has given the strongest evidence. Upon these difficulties, which my duty throws in my way, I leave you to judge what success you have to expect.

MASCARIL. To say the truth, these are obstacles, and very strong ones too; and I have not the knack of working miracles; but I'll go and employ my utmost efforts, leave no stone unturn'd, put the thing in all possible lights, and try to find out some wholesome expedient; I shall tell you presently what's to be done in this matter.

SCENE XIII.

HIPPOLYTA, CELIA.

HIPPOLYTA.

EVER since you've been among us, the ladies here may complain very justly of the robberies committed by your eyes; since you deprive them of the greatest part of their conquests, and make traitors of their lovers. There's not a heart can escape the darts with which you've the art of striking people at first sight; the liberties of thousands offering themselves to your chains, seem to enrich you daily at our expence. As for me, I should make no complaints of the tyranny of your superior charms, if, when you have gained both my loves, one of them had but given me consolation.

for the loss of the other; but I must say it is inhuman in you to take them both from me; and I cannot forbear complaining of it.

CELIA. Madam, you rally with a good grace, but have a little mercy, I beseech you, on your humble servant: those eyes, those very eyes of yours, know their own power too well, to apprehend any thing from what I'm able to do; they are too conscious of their own charms, to take alarm at such trifles.

HIPPOLYTA. And yet I have advanced nothing in what I've said, which has not already happen'd in every heart; and, without naming the rest, 'tis well known that Celia had made deep impressions both upon Leander and Lelius.

CELIA. I believe you'll find no great uneasiness at the loss of two persons who've made such a blind mistake, and will find a lover not worth your valuing, who is capable of making so ill a choice.

HIPPOLYTA. Pardon me, Madam, I am altogether of a different mind; and think your beauty so deserving of admiration, and see so many reasons sufficient to excuse the inconstancy of those who are insensibly won by it, that I can't blame that change of passion, by which Leander has broken the vows he made me; and I am just going, without hatred or fury, to see him recall'd to his obedience by the authority of a father.

SCENE XIV.

CELIA, HIPPOLYTA, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

GREAT, great news! and surprizing suc-
cess that I am now going to tell you!

CELIA. What is it then?

MASCARIL. Hark'ee, you have here without
flattery—

CELIA. What?

MASCARIL. The winding up of a true and ge-
nuine comedy; the old gypfy-woman just now—

CELIA. Well?

MASCARIL. Was crossing the square, thinking
no harm, when another haggard old woman, after
having stared her in the face for some time, at
length broke out into a torrent of abusive language.
This served as a signal to a furious combat, in
which, instead of musquet, dagger, and spear, were
only to be seen in the air four withered fists, with
which these two combatants labour'd their utmost
to tear off the little flesh time had left on their
bones: not a word could one hear, but bitch,
whore, and dirty drab! off fly their head-dresses,
which leaving a couple of bald-pates naked to view,
render'd the battle ridiculously horrible. At the
noise of the hubbub, Ander and Trufaldin, as a
multitude of other people did, running to see what
was the matter, had enough ado to part them; so
furiously were they driven on by passion; in the
mean time each of them, when the storm was a-
bated, strove to hide the disgrace of her head; and
every body wanted to know who began this whim-

fical fray; she who had first raised the alarm, notwithstanding the heat of passion she was in, having fix'd her eyes a considerable time upon Trufaldin; 'tis you, cries she, with a loud voice, if some delusion does not cheat my sight, who, I was informed, liv'd privately in this city; most happy meeting! Yes, Zanobio Ruberti, by good luck I've found you out in the very instant when I was giving myself so much torment for your sake: when you left your family at Naples, I had, you know, your daughter in my keeping, whom I brought up during her infancy, and who discovered, at four years of age, a gracefulness and charming behaviour, by a thousand little actions: she whom you see there, that infamous hag, making herself very familiar in my family, stole away that treasure from me. Your lady, alas! was so much affected with grief at this loss, that it helped to shorten her days; so that this little daughter stole out of my custody, made me dread your severe reproaches, and order it should be given out to you that they were both dead; but 'tis necessary now I found her out that she discover what is become of her. At the name of Zanobio Ruberti, which she often repeated in the course of her narration, Ander having changed countenance for some time, addressed himself to the surpriz'd Trufaldin in these words: What then! has heaven most happily directed me to find him whom I have hitherto sought in vain, and could I behold the source of blood, the author of my being, without knowing! Yes, my father, I am Horatio, your son: Alberti my tutor dying, and I perceiving several other inquietudes growing upon me, I left Bologna, and quitting my studies, wander'd about for six years, through different places,

just as the strength of curiosity moved me. Nevertheless, after this, a secret instinct moved me to revisit my kindred and my country: but at Naples, alas! I could no more find you, nor know what was become of you, but by confused reports: so that having lost my labour in search of you, Venice, for a while, put a stop to my fruitless roving; and from that time to this I have liv'd without knowing any more of my family than the name. I leave you to judge, ladies, whether Trufaldin was not more than ordinary transported all this while; in a word, to cut the matter short, which you'll have the opportunity of informing yourselves about more at leisure, from the confession of your old gypsy-woman, Trufaldin owns you now for his daughter; Ander is your brother; and as he can no longer think of enjoying his sister, an obligation he is pleased to own, has prevail'd with him to gain the point of your marriage with my young master, whose father was present at this discovery, and has given his consent; and to complete the joy of his family, he has proposed his daughter to the new-found Horatio. See what a number of incidents have happened at one birth!

CElia. So many novelties perfectly astonish me.

MASCARIL. The whole company are at my heels, except the two she-champions, who are still refreshing themselves after the fatigue of battle: Leander and your father are along with them. I'll go inform my master of this, and tell him that when matters were looked upon as strongest against him, heaven has almost wrought a miracle in his favour.

[Exit Mascaril.

HIPPOLYTA. This fortunate event fills me

with as much joy as if it related to myself. But here they come.

SCENE XV.

TRUFALDIN, ANSELM, PANDOLPH, CELIA,
HIPPOLYTA, LEANDER, ANDER.

O TRUFALDIN.
H, my child!

CELIA. My father!

TRUFALDIN. Dost thou know how much heaven has blessed us?

CELIA. I've just heard all this wonderful adventure.

HIPPOLYTA to Leander.] It would be in vain to make speeches in excuse for your passion; the object which caused it is a sufficient excuse.

LEANDER. I desire only a generous pardon, and protest to heaven, that in this sudden return, my father hath little influence in comparison with my own inclination.

ANDER to Celia.] Who would ever have believed that the pure flame which actuated my heart could one day be condemned by nature? However, 'twas regulated by so much honour, that with a small variation I may still retain it.

CELIA. For my part, I blam'd myself, and thought I committed a fault in having no more than a very high esteem for you; I could not comprehend what prevented my heart from confessing a flame, which my senses made so strong efforts to introduce into my soul.

TRUFALDIN to Celia.] But now I have found thee, what will my child say of me, if I am think-

ing immediately to part with thee, and engage thee in the laws of wedlock to this gentleman's son?

CELIA. I know no will but your's.

SCENE THE LAST.

TRUFALDIN, ANSELM, PANDOLPH, CELIA,
HIPPOLYTA, LELIUS, LEANDER, ANDER,
MASCARIL..

MASCARIL to Lelius.

NOW let's see whether this devil o' yours will be able to destroy so solid a foundation as this; and whether your fruitful invention will again arm itself against this excess of good luck that's come to us? By a most unexpected favourable turn of fortune, your desires are crowned, and Celia is yours.

LELIUS. May I believe that the absolute power of heaven—

TRUFALDIN. Yes, my son, 'tis really so.

PANDOLPH. The thing is resolved upon.

ANDER to Lelius.] By this I have acquitted myself of what I owe you.

LELIUS to Mascaril.] I must embrace thee a thousand, and a thousand times, in this excess of joy—

MASCARIL. Oh! oh! gently, I beseech you; you have almost stifled me: I'm terribly afraid for Celia, if you clasp her with so much eagerness! she will be glad to excuse such embraces.

TRUFALDIN to Lelius.] You know the happiness with which heaven has blest me in particular; but since one and the same day has given joy to us

all, let us not part till 'tis ended, and let Leander's father be sent for immediately.

MASCARIL. Here now you are all provided for; but is there ne'er a snug wench, that may accommodate poor Mascaril? It gives me too a strange inclination to matrimony, to see every lad here with his lass.

ANSELM. I've one will do thy business exactly.

MASCARIL.

Come on, my brave boys, and may heaven think fitting,

To send us pretty babes of our own begetting.

THE END.



T H E

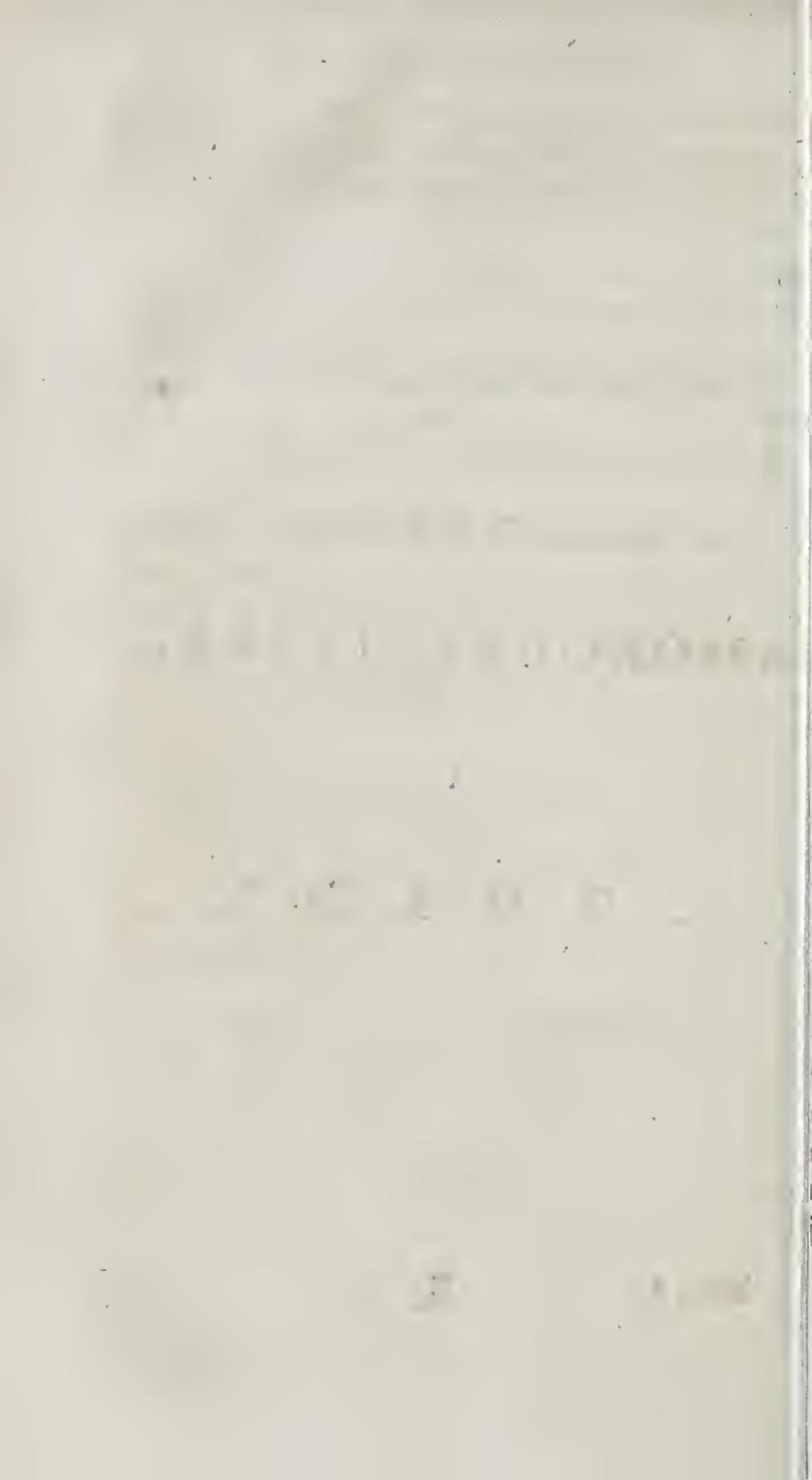
AMOROUS QUARREL.

A

C O M E D Y.

VOL. I.

E





*The AMOROUS QUARREL, a Comedy of Five
Acts, performed at Paris, at the Theatre of
Little Bourbon, in the month of December, 1658.*

THE incidents of the Amorous Quarrel are ranged with a great deal of art, though altogether in the Spanish taste; too complicated in the working, and little versimilitude in the unravelling: however, there is a source of the true comic in the painting of the characters: 'The fathers, lovers, mistresses, servants; all are mutually ignorant of the particular views by which each is agitated, and by turns bring each other into a labyrinth of errors, from which they can't disengage themselves. The conversation of Valere with A-scarius in man's apparel, that of the two old men who reciprocally ask pardon of each other without daring to discover the cause of their uneasiness, the situation of Lucilia accused in the presence of her father, and the stratagem of Eraurus to get the truth from his servant, are passages equally pleasant and ingenious. But the eclaircissement between the same Eraurus and Lucilia, which gave the title of the Amorous Quarrel to the piece, their falling out and reconciliation, are the most justly admired parts of this piece.

A C T O R S.

ALBERTO, Father to Ascanius and Lucilia.

POLIDOR, Father to Valere.

LUCILIA, Daughter to Alberto.

ASCANIUS, Alberto's daughter, in man's cloaths.

ERASTUS, in love with Lucilia.

VALERE, Son to Polidor.

MARINETTA, Maid to Lucilia.

TROSINA, Confident to Ascanius.

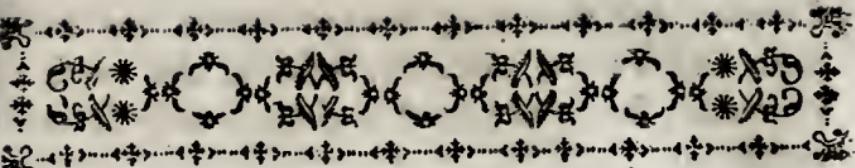
METOPHRASTUS, a Pedant.

GROS-RENARD, Servant to Eraftus.

MASCARIN, Servant to Valere.

RAPIERE, a Bully.

S C E N E, P A R I S.



THE
AMOROUS QUARREL.

A C T . I . S C E N E . I .

E R A S T U S , G R O S - R E N A R D .

E R A S T U S . . .

E R A S T U S . . .
If I must tell thee the truth, I have a secret uneasiness which never leaves my mind at true ease. Yes, though you may make a jest of my love, to say the truth, I am afraid of its being injur'd; that thy fidelity may be corrupted in favour of a rival, or at least imposed on as well as myself.

Gros-Renard. For my part I must needs say, no offence to your honour's love, that to harbour these suspicions is wronging my integrity, and betraying a very bad skill in physiognomy. People of my bulk are seldom accus'd, thank heaven, of being either knaves or plotters. Neither do I belie that honour which is done to us, but am a round man in all respects. People may deceive me, indeed; but I'm sure if they do, I know nothing of the matter. I'm a dog if I can yet see upon what you have been able to take this chimera into your head. Lucilia, in my opinion, shew's love enough.

for you; she sees you, converses with you every day; and Valere, after all, who is the cause of your fear, seems admitted at present only through constraint.

Eraftus. A lover often feeds himself with false hopes. The best receiv'd are not always the most belov'd. Whatever affection women may shew, 'tis often but a fine veil to cover their passion for others. Besides, Valere has lately shewn too much tranquillity for a repuls'd lover; and as to his shewing joy, or at least indifference, at those favours which you think done to me, 'tis what poisons continually their greatest charms to me, gives me an anxiety which thou dost not comprehend, holds my happiness in suspense, and makes me give little or no credit to whatever Lucilia says to me. To think my destiny truly happy, I would see him transported with jealousy a little; and from his displeasure and impatience my heart would then receive full assurance. Dost thou thyself think it possible for any one to see a rival caressed, as he does, with a contented mind? And if thou believest nothing of it, yet tell me, I conjure thee, if I have not room to be disturbed.

Gros-Renard. Perhaps he has chang'd his inclinations, finding that he sigh'd in vain.

Eraftus. When a heart is set free by repulses, it flies the object with which it was affected, and does not break its chain with so little trouble as to be able to continue in a peaceable state: our having been fond before of the fatal presence, prevents our being ever left in indifference; and if our disdain does not increase at the sight of her we once loved, it is a sure sign that the former affection is not wholly extinguished. In short, believe me,

though our flame be extinguished never so well; a little jealousy dwells in the breast; and one can't see, without concern, the heart which we have lost, possess'd by another.

Gros-Renard. For my part, I don't understand so much philosophy; seeing's believing, and I am not such a mortal enemy to myself, as to go to disturb myself without a cause. Why should one study to find out reasons to make himself miserable? Shall I go to alarm myself about castles in the air? Let Lent come, before we keep it. The spleen appears to me to be an incommodious thing; and, for my part, I never entertain it without good and just cause; and truly a hundred things very frequently come in my sight to give it me, which I don't think fit to see. I run the same risque in love as you do, and the concern you have ought to be common to me; the mistress can't abuse your fidelity, but that the maid will do the same by me; but I avoid the thought of it with an extreme deal of care. I am willing to believe people when they say, I love thee, and don't go to inquire, in order to esteem myself happy, if Mascaril tears his hair off of his head or not. Let Marinetta suffer herself to be kis'd and carefs'd by Joddelet, if she will; and let that fine rival laugh at it like a fool; I'll laugh my belly-full at it likewise after his example; and see who laughs with the best grace.

Eraurus. This is like thy talk.

Gros-Renard. But I perceive her coming this way.

S C E N E II.

ERASTUS, MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

HIST! Marinetta.

GROS-RENARD.

Marinetta. Hey-day! what do you do here?

Gros-Renard. D'ye ask? faith, we are just now talking of you.

Marinetta. Are you there too, Sir? Let me die if you have not made me trot about like a pack-horse for this hour past.

Eraurus. How so?

Marinetta. I have walk'd ten miles to look for you, and I give you my word—

Eraurus. What?

Marinetta. That you was neither at church, at court, at home, nor in the grand walk.

Gros-Renard. You may fwear it.

Eraurus. Tell me then, pr'ythee, who made you look for me.

Marinetta. One, in good truth, who has not too much ill-will for you; my mistress.

Eraurus. Ah, dear Marinetta! is thy discourse the true interpreter of her heart? Don't conceal from me a fatal mystery; I should not wish thee any evil for it: for heaven's sake tell me, if thy charming mistress does not abuse my love with a false tenderness?

Marinetta. Ha, ha, ha! whence came this merry thought into your head? Does she not sufficient-
ly shew her inclination? what security is there further that your love demands? what would it have?

Gros-Renard. That Valere hang himself at least; without such a trifle as this, his heart won't rest, assur'd.

Marinetta. How so?

Gros-Renard. Why he's mad with jealousy.

Marinetta. Of whom? Of Valere? hah! truly, the fancy is very fine! It could only be hatch'd in your brain. I thought you a man of sense, and till this moment had a good opinion of your wit, but by what I see I was very much deceiv'd. Is thy head touch'd with this distemper too?

Gros-Renard. I jealous! heaven defend me from it, and from being so mad as to go and make myself lean with such a concern: besides that thy fidelity assures me of thy heart; the opinion I have of myself is too good to believe that any other could please thee after me: where the deuce could you find a lover equal to me?

Marinetta. In truth you say right, that's as it should be: a jealous man should never discover his suspicions; all the fruit he gathers from it is to distract himself, and by the same means advance the designs of a rival: your spleen often opens a mistress's eyes to a merit, the brightness of which hurts yourselves; and I know one who owes his happiness to the too great uneasiness of his jealous rival. In short, be it as it will, to shew suspicion in love is to play a very bad part, and after all to make one's self miserable upon trust. This, Eraustus, is said to you by the bye.

Eraustus. Very well, let us drop the subject. What have you to say to me?

Marinetta. You justly deserve to be kept longer in suspense; and to punish you I should keep conceal'd from you the grand secret which has made

me hunt for you so much: here, see this letter, and be out of doubt; read it aloud, for here's no-body listens.

Eraustus reads.] " You have assured me that your " love was capable of doing any thing. It may be " crown'd this very day, if you can but get my fa- " ther's consent. Declare the power you have o- " ver my heart; I give you permission to do it; and " if it turns in your favour, I shall answer you " with my obedience." — Ah! what good for-
tune is this! for you that brought it me, I ought to regard thee as a deity.

Gros-Renard. I told you so: contrary to your belief, I'm seldom deceiv'd in things that I think.

Eraustus reading it again.] " Declare the power " you have over my heart; I give you permission to " do it; and if it turns in your favour, I shall an- " swer you with my obedience."

Marinetta. If I should tell her now of your jea-
lous whims and fancies, she would immediately disown such a letter as this.

Eraustus. No, pray conceal my rash fear from her, for which I thought I saw some small matter of rea-
son; or if you do tell it her, tell her at the same time that I'm ready to expiate the error of this mad-
ness with my death, and that I'll sacrifice my life at her feet, rather than incur her displeasure.

Marinetta. Let us not talk of death, this is no time for it.

Eraustus. However, I'm greatly indebted to thee, and intend shortly to acknowledge in a handsome manner the pains of so braye and lovely a mes-
senger.

Marinetta. Well thought on; do you know where I look'd for you just now?

Eraſtus. Where?

Marinetta. Very nigh the market, you know where.

Eraſtus. Whereabouts there?

Marinetta. There—in that shop where your magnificent heart, several months ago, out of its great bounty, promis'd me a ring.

Eraſtus. Um—I understand you.

Gros-Renard. Cunning jade!

Eraſtus. 'Tis true, I have delayed too long to make good my promise to thee. But—

Marinetta. What I said of it, Sir, was not meant to prefs you—

Gros-Renard. Oh! no.

Eraſtus giving her his ring.] You may like this, perhaps; accept of it for that which I owe thee.

Marinetta. You only jest, Sir, I should be aſham'd to take it.

Gros-Renard. Poor shame-fac'd creature, take it without more ado. Only fools refuse what is given them.

Marinetta. I'll do it only that I may keep something for your sake then.

Eraſtus. When may I return thanks to that dear angel thy mistres?

Marinetta. Endeavour to make her father favourable to you.

Eraſtus. But if he reject me, should I—

Marinetta. Why, then, we must do as well as we can: one way or other she must be yours: use your might, and we'll use ours.

Eraſtus. Farewel, we shall know the success of it to-day. [Reads the letter again to himself.

Marinetta to Gros-Renard.] And for us, what:

shall we say too of our amour? Thou dost not speak to me of it.

Gros-Renard. A wish'd-for wedding, amongst such gentry as we, is a thing soon done. I'll have thee: wilt thou have me?

Marinetta. With all my heart..

Gros-Renard. Shake hands, I take you at your word.

Marinetta. Farewel, Gros-Renard, my delight.

Gros-Renard. Farewel, my star.

Marinetta. Adieu, fair firebrand of my flame:

Gros-Renard. Adieu, dear comet, rainbow of my soul. [Exit Marinetta.] Heaven be prais'd, our affairs go well; Alberto's a man that will refuse you nothing.

Marinetta. Here comes Valere.

Gros-Renard. I pity the poor wretch, considering what has pass'd.

S. C E N E III.

VALERE, ERASTUS, GROS-RENARD.

W ERASTUS.
ELLE, Signior Valere?
Valere. Well, Signior Eraſtus?
Eraſtus. How goes your amour on?
Valere. How goes yours?
Eraſtus. Better and better every day.
Valere. So does mine.
Eraſtus. For Lucilia?
Valere. For her.
Eraſtus. Certainly, I must own that you are a model of uncommon constancy.

Valere. And your firmness ought to be a rare example to all future lovers.

Erastus. For my part, I'm little calculated for that austere kind of love which finds enough in bare looks to satisfy it, nor can I form fine sentiments enough to suffer ill treatment with constancy: in short, when I really love, I love to be belov'd again.

Valere. 'Tis very natural, and I'm of the same opinion: the most perfect beauty that I could be charm'd with, should no longer have any charms for me, than while she returned my passion with kindness.

Erastus. However Lucilia——

Valere. Lucilia in her heart does every thing for my passion that I could wish her to do.

Erastus. You are easily contented then.

Valere. Not so easily as you imagine.

Erastus. I may, however, without too much vanity believe that I'm in her favour.

Valere. And I know that I hold a very good place in't.

Erastus. Don't abuse yourself, but believe me.

Valere. Believe me, and don't let your too credulous eyes make a dupe of you.

Erastus. If I might dare to shew you a sure proof that her heart—— No, your soul would be mov'd by it.

Valere. If I might dare to discover a secret to you—— But I will not be so rash; it would too much distress you.

Erastus. Since you urge me so, and your presumption forces me to humble it against my desire, read that.

Valere, after having read it.] These are tender words.

Eraurus. You know the hand.

Valere. Yes, it is Lucilia's.

Eraurus. Well, this so certain hope—

Valere laughing, and going away.] Farewel, Signior Eraurus.

Gros-Renard. The man's a fool, sure: whence comes it that he should have reason to laugh?

Eraurus. Faith, he surprizes me, and between us I can't guess what the deuce of a mystery is hid under this.

Gros-Renard. Here comes his valet, I think.

Eraurus. Yes, I see him appear; let us play the counterfeit, to set him a talking of his master's amour.

S C E N E IV.

ERASTUS, MASCARIL, GROS-RENARD

MASCARIL aside.

SURE never was condition more unfortunate, than to have a young and very amorous master.

Gros-Renard. Good-morrow t'ye.

Mascaril. Good-morrow.

Gros-Renard. Where tends Mascaril at this hour? what is his busness? comes he back? goes he? or stays he where he is?

Mascaril. No, I'm not come back, for I have not been; neither do I go, because I'm stopt; nor do I stay, for this very moment I intend to be gone.

Eraurus. Softly, Mascaril, don't be so very rigid.

Mascaril. Hah! servant, Sir.

Eraustus. You seem in a great hurry to be gone from us; what, do we frighten you?

Mascaril. I could not think of that, Sir, from your courtesy.

Eraustus. Shake hands; all jealousy is now at an end between us; we'll become friends, and my flame, which I extinguish, leaves free room for your happy designs.

Mascaril. Would to heaven it were so!

Eraustus. Gros-Renard knows that I turn me elsewhere.

Gros-Renard. It is very true; and I likewise give up Marinetta to thee.

Mascaril. Let us pass by that point; our rivalry is not such a one as is like to come to a great extremity. But is it a thing for certain that your worship is disenamour'd, or is it only a jest?

Eraustus. I have learn'd that your master is but too fortunate in his amours, and I should be a fool to pretend any longer to the secret favours which that lady grants to him alone.

Mascaril. I am overjoyed at this news; besides that I was a little afraid of you with regard to our designs, you wisely slipt your neck out of the collar: you have done well to leave a place where you was only caress'd out of mere grimace; and I, knowing all that pass'd, have a thousand times bemoan'd the false hopes you were fed with. 'Tis an offence to abuse a man of honour: but how the deuce, after all, did you find out the trick? for the mutual engagement of their troth had only Mrs. Night, myself, and two others for witnesses: and it was thought the knot which now has made them happy in each other, was a secret to all the world.

Eraustus. How! what say you?

Mascaril. I say that I'm amaz'd, Sir, and can't guess who could have told you, that under this falfe colour, that deceiv'd all the world, and you too, their unequall'd passion had join'd them by a private marriage.

Eraurus. You lie.

Mascaril. Sir, with all my heart.

Eraurus. You are a rascal.

Mascaril. Agreed.

Eraurus. And this impudence deserves a sound drubbing on the spot.

Mascaril. You have entire power.

Eraurus. Ah! Gros-Renard..

Gros Renard. Sir..

Eraurus. I contradict a relation which I fear is too true. [To Mascaril.] Do you think to fly?

Mascaril. No, no.

Eraurus. What! Lucilia is wife to—

Mascaril. No, Sir, I did but jest.

Eraurus. Hey! was you in jest, scoundrel?

Mascaril. No, I was not in jest.

Eraurus. Is it true then?

Mascaril. No, no, I don't say that..

Eraurus. What do you say then?

Mascaril. Alas! I say nothing, for fear I shou'd say wrong.

Eraurus. Tell me positively whether this story is true or false.

Mascaril. 'Tis what you please. I don't come here to dispute any thing with you.

Eraurus drawing his sword.] Will you tell me? here's something that will untie your tongue without more ado.

Mascaril.. It will make some foolish speech again; be pleased rather, if you think fit, to give

me quickly a few bastinadoes, and leave me to scamper off without murmuring.

Eraurus. This is thy last moment, if you do not reveal the whole truth to me.

Mascaril. Alas! I will tell it then; but, perhaps, Sir, I shall make you angry.

Eraurus. Speak: but take great care of what you do; nothing shall be able to deliver thee from my just rage, if you speak but one word false in what you say.

Mascaril. I agree to't: break my legs, arms, do worse to me still, kill me, if I in the least impose upon you in any thing I have said.

Eraurus. Is it true then that they are married?

Mascaril. My tongue, in this case, made a gross mistake, as I plainly perceive; but in short, the business is just as I told you; and it was after five days of nocturnal visits, you serving all the while to cover their sport the better, that the day before yesterday they were joined by this knot: Lucilia ever since makes a less shew of the violent love she bears my master, and absolutely will have him impute every thing he shall see, and all she does in your favour, to the effect of her high prudence, that would prevent the discovery of their secrets. Now, Sir, if you are doubtful of the truth of what I tell you, Gros-Renard may come one night along with me, and I'll shew him as I stand sentinel, that we have a free access to her apartment as soon as it is dark.

Eraurus. Out of my sight, villain.

Mascaril. With a very good will, 'tis what I want. [Exit.]

Eraurus. Well!

Gros-Renard. Well! Sir; we are both bit, if all he says be true.

Eraustus. Ah! the odious rascal is but too much so. I see too much likelihood in every thing he said; and Valere's behaviour, at sight of this letter, shews plainly their acting in concert, and that this certainly serves for a sham to the passion which that ungrateful woman returns him.

S C E N E V.

ERASTUS, MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

MARINETTA.

I COME to give you notice, that this evening my mistress permits you to see her in the garden.

Eraustus. Deceitful emissary of a perfidious mistress! Go out of my sight, and tell thy mistress to trouble me no more with her letters, and that this is the way, gipsy, I use them.

[Tears the letter, and goes out.

Marinetta. Hey-day! what's the matter now? Pr'ythee, tell me, Gros-Renard, the meaning of all this.

Gros-Renard. Dar'st thou to speak to me again, iniquitous female? Deceitful crocodile! whose felonious heart is worse than a satrap, or a lestrigon. Go, go, carry an answer to your lovely mistress, and tell her, well and good, that for all her suppleness neither my master, nor I, are any longer fools, and that henceforth she and thee may go to the devil together.

[Exit.

Marinetta alone.] Poor Marinetta, art thou really awake? What devil are they posses'd with? Is

it thus our obliging favours are received? Mercy on us! how my mistress will be amazed at this!

ACT II. SCENE I.

ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

FROSINA.

I THANK heaven, Ascanius, I can keep a secret.

Ascanius. But are we secure enough here for such a conversation? Let us take care that no body surprize us, or overhear our conversation.

Frosina. We should be much less secure in the house; here we may easily see on all sides, and may speak with all safety.

Ascanius. Alas! what pain is it to me to break silence!

Frosina. Hey-day! this must be an important secret then.

Ascanius. It is so indeed, since I even tell it you with regret, and which you should not know if I could hide it any longer.

Frosina. Fie; this is an affront to me, to scruple opening yourself to me, whom you have found of so reserved a disposition in all your concerns. Me who was nurs'd with you, and have kept secret things of so great importance to you! who know—

Ascanius. Yes, you are already acquainted with the secret reason which conceals from the eyes of the world my sex and family: you know that I'm in this house, where I have pass'd my infancy, in order to preserve the inheritance which would have

devolv'd to others at the death of young Ascanius, whose fate is reviv'd by this disguise of mine, and for this reason I dare to open my heart to you with more confidence. But before we go upon this conversation, Frosina, clear up a doubt that I continually fall into: can it be possible that Alberto should know nothing of the mystery which thus disfigures my sex, and makes him my father?

Frosina. Why, truly, I am as much puzzled to know what to think of this matter as yourself: the bottom of this affair is a secret to me, nor could my mother give me any light into the matter. When this son died, who was so much belov'd, and who had great legacies left him, even before he came to light, by the will of a careful uncle, who wallow'd in wealth; his mother made a secret of his death, fearing that her husband, who was absent at that time, would have run mad to have seen the great inheritance, from which his family reap'd so much advantage, devolve to another. I say, to hide this accident, it was thought proper to take you into our family, where you was nurs'd up; your mother agreed to this cheat, which fill'd up the place of this son again; and secrecy was promis'd for a few presents. Alberto has never known it from us, and as for his wife, having kept it in her breast for more than twelve years, and the illness she died of being sudden, her unexpected death prevented any thing from being discovered by her: but notwithstanding, I perceive that he holds intelligence with your real mother. I know too that in private he does her some kindness, and perhaps he does not do this for nothing. On the other hand, he would bring you to marry, and as he intends the match, 'tis a puzzling story.

unless he knows the imposture without knowing your sex. But this digression has insensibly carried us too far out of the way, let us return to the secret, which I'm very eager to hear.

Ascanius. Know then, that Cupid can't be deceiv'd, that my sex has not been able to disguise itself from his eyes, and that his subtle shafts have, under the habit that I wear, reach'd the heart of a weak woman: in short, I'm in love.

Frosina. In love!

Ascanius. Soft, Frosina; don't be quite astonish'd; 'tis not time yet: for this wounded heart has something else to tell you, that will truly astonish you.

Frosina. What's that?

Ascanius. I'm in love with Valere.

Frosina. Hah! you are in the right, to love one from whose family your imposture takes a great inheritance, and who, if he had the least notice of your sex, would presently regain it: this is still a greater subject of astonishment.

Ascanius. I have something to surprize you still more with: I am his wife.

Frosina. O heavens! his wife?

Ascanius. Yes, his wife.

Frosina. Ha! this outdoes all indeed, and is beyond all my reason.

Ascanius. This is not all yet.

Frosina. Not yet!

Ascanius. I am his wife, I say, without his knowing it, nor has he the least idea of what I really am.

Frosina. Nay then I have done, and will reason no more about it, my senses are confounded at every word. It is all a riddle to me.

Ascanius. I'll explain it to you, if you will but hear me. Valere, bound in my sister's chains, appeared to me a lover worthy to be hearken'd to: I could not bear to see his passion disdainfully rejected, without being a little interested for him at heart: I would have had Lucilia take pleasure in his conversation, I blam'd her severity, and blam'd it so effectually, that I myself, without being able to help it, enter'd into all those sentiments which she could not entertain: 'twas in talking to her that he persuaded me, suffering myself to be overcome by those sighs which he threw away; and those vows of his which were rejected by the object he was enamoured with, were like conquerors receiv'd into my breast. Thus, Frosina, my too weak heart, alas! fell a victim to assiduities which were directed to another, receiv'd a wound by a rebounded stroke, and with mighty usury paid another's debt. At last, my dear, at last the love I had for him, forc'd me to declare myself, but under a borrowed name, and this too amiable lover thought he had found in me, one night, Lucilia favourable to his vows, and I managed that conversation so well, that he found nothing of the disguise. Under this deceitful veil, which was so pleasing to his deluded imagination, I told him, that my heart was enamour'd with him, but that finding my father was of another opinion, I ow'd a seeming compliance to his commands; that therefore we must make a secret of our love, with which the night should be only acquainted, and that our private conversation must be avoided by us in the day time, for fear of doing any mischief. That he should look on me then with the same indifference that he did before we had any intelligence together; and

that on his part, as well as mine, nothing should be discovered either by gesture, word, or writing. In short, without entering into a detail of the arts I put in practice to ensure myself success, I have secured the person I mentioned to you as a husband.

Frosina. So, so, what amazing talents you are mistress of! Would one think it of her with that cold mien? However, you have been pretty hasty here; for though I grant that the thing has succeeded hitherto, don't you think fit to regard the issue of it, which can't long be conceal'd?

Ascanius. When love is strong, nothing can stop it, its own projects can alone satisfy it, and provided it arrives at the mark it proposes, it looks upon every thing afterwards as a mere trifle. But the reason of my now discovering myself to you is, for the sake of your advice, which may—But here comes my husband.

S C E N E II.

VALERE, ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

VALERE.

I'M afraid I break in upon your conversation; if my presence is any interruption I'll retire.

Ascanius. No, no, you may very well break off our conversation, since you was the cause of it.

Valere. I the cause of it?

Ascanius. You yourself.

Valere. How so?

Ascanius. I was faying, that if I had been a woman, Valere would have been too well able to please me; and if I were the object of all his vows,

I should make very little hesitation to make him happy.

Valere. These protestations don't cost much, since there is such an obstacle to their effect; but I fancy you would be hard put to it to make so obliging a declaration, if any unforeseen accident should put you to the proof.

Ascanius. Not at all: I tell you that if I reigned in your heart, I would very willingly crown your passion.

Valere. But supposing there should be a person in the world with whom your good offices might render my future life happy?

Ascanius. I could very ill answer that request.

Valere. This confession is not mighty obliging.

Ascanius. What, Valere! if I were a woman, and lov'd you tenderly, would you unjustly go to engage my promise to assist your passion for another mistress? Such a painful task would not do for me.

Valere. But that not being the thing—

Ascanius. What I have said to you, I have said as a woman, and you ought to take it so.

Valere. So then I must not at all pretend to the good-will you have for me, Ascanius, unless heaven works in you a miracle; that is, if you are not a woman, farewell to your affection; there's nothing else can make you interest yourself for me.

Ascanius. I am of a more delicate temper than you imagine, and the least scruple offends me; when love's in the case I am always sincere; I'll not promise to serve you, Valere, if you don't at least absolutely assure me that you have the same sentiments for me, that you are transported with a

like warmth of friendship, and that if I were a woman, no stronger passion should get the better of that by which I liv'd for you.

Valere. I never before heard of such a jealous scruple; but, as new as it is, the affection is obliging to me, and here I promise you whatever you require of me.

Ascanus. But without deceit?

Valere. Yes, without deceit.

Ascanus. If 'tis true, henceforth I promise you, your interests shall be mine.

Valere. I have an important mystery to tell you by and by, in which the effect of those words will be necessary to me.

Ascanus. And I have likewise a secret to discover to you, which will give you an opportunity to prove the sincerity you have vowed.

Valere. Hey-day! how can that be?

Ascanus. The thing is, that I have a love-affair which I dare not reveal, and you have power enough over the object of my passion to be able to make my lot happy.

Valere. Explain yourself, Ascanus, and be assured beforehand that your happiness is certain, if 'tis in my power to procure it.

Ascanus. You promise here more than you imagine.

Valere. No, no; tell me the person for whom you employ me.

Ascanus. 'Tis not yet a proper time; but 'tis one that's nearly related to you.

Valere. Your discourse surprizes me: pray heaven my sister.—

Ascanus. This is not a proper time to explain myself, I tell you.

Valere. Why so?

Ascanius. I have a reason for it. You shall know my secret when I know yours.

Valere. I must have another's leave for that.

Ascanius. Get it then, and when we unfold our passions, we shall see which of the two will keep his word.

Valere. Adieu, I am content with that.

Ascanius. So am I, Valere. [Exit Valere.

Frosina. He imagines he will find in you the assistance of a brother.

S C E N E III.

LUCILIA, ASCANIUS, FROSINA,
MARINETTA.

LUCILIA to Marinetta.

YES, I am determined, this is the only means I have left of revenge; and if this action be sufficient to torment him, 'tis all the pleasure my heart could propose.—Brother, you perceive a change in me; I am now resolved, after so much ill usage, to encourage Valere, and my love turns on that side at present.

Ascanius. What do you say, sister? how! change so suddenly? This inconstancy seems to me very strange.

Lucilia. Yours surprizes me with more reason; Valere was the object of your good services once: I have known you accuse me on his account, of caprice, blind cruelty, pride, and injustice; and now when I resolve to love him, you seem displeased with my intention, and I find you speaking against his interest.

Ascanius. I leave his, sister, to embrace yours; I know that he is listed under the command of another, and it would be a dishonour to your charms if you call him back, and he does not come.

Lucilia. If that's all, I'll take care of my honour; I know what I'm to believe of his heart; he has very intelligibly laid it open to my sight; so you may discover my sentiments to him without any fear: or if you refuse to do it, my own mouth shall let him know that I am touched with his passion. What! you stand thunderstruck, brother, at these words!

Ascanius. Oh! sister, if I have any influence with you, if you are sensible to a brother's intreaties, quit any such design, and don't take away Valere from the love of a young creature whose interest deeply touches me, and whom, upon my word, you ought to be concerned for; the poor wretch loves him to distraction; to me alone she discloses her flame, and I perceive in her heart such a tender affection as might subdue the most unrelenting heart: yes, you would pity the condition of her mind, if you knew what stroke you threaten her passion with; and I so well feel the grief she would be in, that I'm certain, sister, she'd die of it, if you rob her of the lover whom she adores. Erastus is a match that ought to satisfy you, and the mutual affection you have for each other—

Lucilia. Brother, enough: I don't know for whom you are concerned; but pray, let us give over this discourse, I beg of you, and leave me to consider a little.

Ascanius. Well, cruel sister! you'll drive me to despair, if you carry your design into execution.

SCENE IV.

LUCILIA, MARINETTA.

YMARINETTA.

OUR resolution, Madam, is very hasty.
Lucilia. A fond heart weighs nothing when 'tis once affronted, it flies to its revenge, and eagerly lays hold of whatever it thinks can serve its resentment. The traitor! to shew this extreme insolence!

Marinetta. I declare I am not yet recovered from my surprize; and though I ruminate upon it to eternity, I should never be able to conceive the meaning of it: for in short, never did heart open itself in a handsomer manner at the raptures of good news, for he was so transported with the kind letter, that he no less than deify'd me; and yet at this other message, never was poor girl treated so scurvily. I can't imagine what could happen in such a few moments to occasion so great a change.

Lucilia. Nothing could happen which could give him uneasiness, nor shall any thing secure him from my just hatred. What! would you look for any secret reason for this affront but his own baseness? Will the unfortunate letter, which I now accuse myself for, suffer the least excuse for his indignity?

Marinetta. Why, indeed, I find you are in the right, and that this quarrel is flat treachery. We are bit, Madam; and yet we cannot help listening to these faithless wretches, who chant out wonders to us; who, to hook us in, feign so much languishing; we let our rigour melt to their fine words,

and give up ourselves to their protestations, weak as we are: shame on our folly, and a plague take the men!

Lucilia. Well, well, let him boast, and laugh at our expence, he shall not have cause to triumph upon it long; for I'll let him see that a generous soul, when injured, can speedily substitute hatred in the room of slighted favours.

Marinetta. At least, in such a case, 'tis a great happiness to know that they have no advantage over us. Marinetta was in the right, whatever they may say of it, to suffer nothing one night when some people were in a very merry humour. Another, in hopes of matrimony, would have listened to the temptation; but nescio vos, quo' I.

Lucilia. What impertinence! and what an unseasonable time you have chosen for such fallies! In short! I am sensibly touch'd at heart, and if ever that perfidious lover should, by good fortune, (which I am in the wrong, I think, at present, to conceive any hope of, for heaven has taken too much pleasure in afflicting me, to put it in my power to be reveng'd of him,) whenever, I say, by a propitious chance, he should return to offer me his life as a sacrifice, and at my feet to declare his detestation of this day's behaviour, I charge thee, on thy duty, never to speak to me in his favour; on the contrary, I would have you express your zeal by setting fully before me the greatness of his crime: and if my heart should be tempted by him ever to descend to any meanness, then summon up all your regard for your mistress; speak boldly, spare me not, but bid me to hate him as I ought.

Marinetta. Oh! don't fear, leave that to me; I have at least as much passion as you, and I would

rather be a maid all my life than that my fat rascal should give me any liking to him again—If he comes—

SCENE V.

MARINETTA, LUCILIA, ALBERTO.

ALBERTO.

GO in again, Lucilia, and bid the tutor come to me; I want to know the reason of that gloom and uneasiness which I have observed of late in Ascanius.

SCENE VI.

ALBERTO alone.

INTO what a gulph of cares and disquiet does one unjust action cast us! My heart has long suffer'd a great deal of punishment for forging a son, through my too great avarice; and when I consider the mischiefs that I'm plung'd into, I heartily wish I had never thought on't. Sometimes I'm afraid of beholding my family involved in misery and shame by the cheat's being discover'd; sometimes I fear a hundred accidents that may happen to this son, whom it concerns me to preserve. If any business happens to call me abroad, I'm apprehensive of this sorrowful news at my return; soh! don't you know it? have they told you of it? your son has a fever; or his leg or arm is broke. In short, whenever I have the least time for reflection, a thousand different apprehensions are contin-

ually entering into my head.—But here comes the tutor.

S C E N E VII.

ALBERTO, METAPHRASTUS.

METAPHRASTUS.
MANDATUM tuum euro diligentur.

Alberto. Master, I want to—

Metaphraстus. Master is derived from magister; 'tis as though you should say three times greater.

Alberto. May I die if I knew that; but in good time be it so. Master then—

Metaphraстus. Proceed.

Alberto. So I would proceed, but don't you proceed to interrupt me thus. Once more then, master, for the third time: my son gives me great uneasiness; you know that I love him, and that I have always carefully brought him up.

Metaphraстus. 'Tis true: *Filio non potest praeferri nisi filius.*

Alberto. Master, in common discourse this jargon is not at all necessary, I think; I believe you a great Latinist, and a sworn doctor; I rely on those who assur'd me so: but in a conversation that I design to have with you, don't go to display all your learning, to play the pedant, and to splutter out a hundred words upon me, as if you were in a pulpit preaching. My father, though he was a wise man, and a great scholar, never taught me any thing but my mass-book, which, though I said it daily for fifty years, is still high Dutch to me. Therefore let me beg you to lay aside your prodi-

gious learning, and adapt your language to my weak understanding.

Metaphraustus. Be it so.

Alberto. To come to my son then. Matrimony seems to frighten him, and whatever match I found his heart upon, he is cold to it, and draws back.

Metaphraustus. Perhaps he may be of the humour of Mark Tully's brother, which we find set forth by himself in his speech to Atticus, and which the Greeks call Atanatos.

Alberto. For heaven's sake, thou eternal school-master, I beg of ye to have done with the Greeks, the Albanians and Esclavonians, and all the other nations you want to talk of; they and my son have nothing to do together.

Metaphraustus. Well then, your son?

Alberto. I cannot tell whether he entertains some secret passion or not; but something troubles him, or I'm much deceiv'd; and I perceiv'd him yesterday, without his seeing me, in a corner of a wood where no creature ever goes—

Metaphraustus. In the recess of a wood, you mean, a recluse place, Latine, secessus; Virgil says, est in secessu locus—

Alberto. How the devil could Virgil say that, since I'm certain in that secret place there was not a creature but us two.

Metaphraustus. I quoted Virgil as a famous author, who makes use of a better expression than that of your's, and not as a witness of what you saw yesterday.

Alberto. I tell you that I neither want a more chosen term, author, or witness, and that my own testimony is here sufficient.

Metaphraustus. However, you ought to chuse the words which are used by the best authors; *tu vivendo bonos*, as the saying is, *scribendo, sequare peritos*.

Alberto. Good man, or rather devil, wilt thou hear me without disputing?

Metaphraustus. It is a precept of Quintilian's.

Alberto. Plague take the babbler!

Metaphraustus. And thereupon he says a very learned thing, which you would most assuredly be glad to hear.

Alberto. The deuce take thee for a puppy! Oh! how strangely am I tempted to apply something to those chops!

Metaphraustus. What makes you thus choleric? What is it you would have of me?

Alberto. I have told you twenty times that I would have you hear me when I speak.

Metaphraustus. Oh! undoubtedly, you shall be satisfied if that's all; I am silent.

Alberto. You do wisely.

Metaphraustus. I am ready to hear you.

Alberto. So much the better.

Metaphraustus. May I die if I say another word.

Alberto. Heaven grant that.

Metaphraustus. You shan't accuse me of talkativeness henceforth.

Alberto. Be it so.

Metaphraustus. Speak when you will.

Alberto I'm going to do it.

Metaphraustus. And don't fear any more interruption from us.

Alberto. That's enough.

Metaphraustus. I am more punctual than anyone.

Alberto. I believe so.

Metaphraſtus. I have promis'd to fay nothing.

Alberto. 'Tis ſufficient.

Metaphraſtus. From this moment I'm dumb.

Alberto. Very well.

Metaphraſtus. Speak; come on: I'll give you a hearing at leaſt; don't complain of my want of ſilence again; I won't ſo much as open my mouth.

Alberto aside.] Villain!

Metaphraſtus. But pray be concise; ſince I hear a long time, it is very reaſonable that I ſpeak in my turn.

Alberto. Detestable blockhead!

Metaphraſtus. Hey! good lack! would you have me hear always? Let me partake of ſpeaking, or I'll be gone.

Alberto. My patience is really—

Metaphraſtus. What, will you proceed? not done yet? per Jovem, I'm cloy'd.

Alberto. I have not ſpoke a—

Metaphraſtus. Again? good heavens! what an harangue! can nothing ſtop the current of it?

Alberto aside.] I am mad.

Metaphraſtus. Still? O what a ſtrange torture! hey! let me ſpeak a little, I conjure you; a fool that holds his tongue does not diſtinguiſh himſelf from a wife man.

Alberto. S'death! I'll make thee hold thine.

S C E N E VIII.

M E T A P H R A S T U S alone.

FROM thence comes very properly that ſen-
tence of the philosopher: " Speak, that I
" may know thee." Therefore if the power of

speaking is taken from me I may as well be divested of my humanity, and change my essence for that of a beast. I shall have the head-ach these eight days. O how I detest great talkers! But what? if learned men are not heard, if people would have their mouths always clos'd, the order of every thing must then be overturned; the chickens in a little time will devour the fox; young children remonstrate to old men; the lambs take pleasure in pursuing the wolf; the fool make laws; women go to battle; judges be try'd by criminals; and masters whipt by the scholars; the sick man prescribe to the physician; the timorous hare—

SCENE IX.

ALBERTO, METAPHRASTUS.

[Alberto rings a bell in the ears of Metaphraustus, and drives him off.]

METAPHRASTUS.
MERCY on me! Help, help!



ACT III. SCENE I.

MASCARIL.

WE frequently find that success attends a rash design; and it is the busines of every one to extricate himself as well out of a bad affair as he can. As for me, who have imprudently talked too much, the readiest remedy I could

have recourse to was to push my point, and immediately tell our old patron the whole intrigue. His son, that perplexes me, is a giddy-brained mortal. The other devil, by telling what I discovered to him, has made a rent in our jacket: however, before his fury can be kindled, something fortunate may happen for us, and the old men may agree amongst themselves. This is what I am going to attempt, and for that purpose have brought a message from my master to old Alberto.

[Knocks at Alberto's door.

S C E N E II.

ALBERTO, MASCARIL.

W A L B E R T O.
HO knocks?

Mascaril. A friend.

Alberto. Hey-day, what could bring thee hither, Mascaril?

Mascaril. I come, Sir, to bid you good-morrow.

Alberto. Hah! truly you take a great deal of pains. Good-morrow then with all my heart.

[Going.

Mascaril. The reply is quick! What a blunt man 'tis! But I'm not so easily put off. [Knocks.

Alberto. Again.

Mascaril. You have not heard me, Sir——

Alberto. Didst thou not bid me good-morrow.

Mascaril. Yes.

Alberto. Well, good-morrow, I fay.

[Going, Mascaril stops him.

Mascaril. Yes; but I come likewise with Signor Polidor's compliments to you.

Alberto. Oh! that's another thing. Has thy master order'd thee to make his compliments to me?

Mascaril. Yes.

Alberto. I am obliged him; go, I wish him all happiness. [Goes out.

Mascaril. This man is an enemy to ceremony. [Knocks.] I have not finish'd his compliment, Sir, he would desire one thing of you instantly.

Alberto. Well, whenever he pleases, I am at his service.

Mascaril stopping him.] Pray stay, Sir, and hear me out. He desires to talk with you a moment about an important affair, and he'll come hither.

Alberto. Hey! what affair can it be that makes him desire to talk with me?

Mascaril. A great secret, I tell you, which he has this moment discovered, and which, certainly, greatly concerns you both. I have now delivered my message. Sir, your servant.

S C E N E III.

A L B E R T O alone.

GOOD heavens! how I tremble; we have little acquaintance together, and what can bring him to me now? Some tempest is going to overturn my designs, and this secret is certainly that which I fear. The hope of interest has made somebody unfaithful to me, and so there's an eternal blot upon my honour; my imposture is discover'd. O how difficult it is to keep the truth long

conceal'd! How much better had it been for me, and my reputation, to have follow'd the instigations of a just fear, by which I have been twenty times tempted to give up to Polidor an estate which I owe him, to prevent the clamour this stroke will expose me to, and cause every thing to pass in silence! But, alas! 'tis over, there's no longer an opportunity, and this wealth which wrongfully came into my family, won't be taken out of it, without carrying away the greatest part of mine along with it.

S C E N E IV.

. P O L I D O R , A L B E R T O .

Polidor not seeing Alberto.

TO be thus marry'd without one's knowing any thing of it! Can this action end well? I know not what to think on't, and I dread the consequences from the great wealth and just anger of the father— But I see him there alone.

Alberto. O heavens! here comes Polidor.

Polidor. I tremble to accost him.

Alberto. Fear keeps me back.

Polidor. How shall I begin?

Alberto. What shall I say?

Polidor. He seems much disturbed.

Alberto. He changes colour.

Polidor advancing.] I see, Signior Alberto, by the trouble that appears in your eyes, that you know already the unhappy affair that brings me to this place.

Alberto. Alas! I know it but too well.

Polidor. You might well be surpriz'd at the

news, and I could scarce believe what I just now heard.

Alberto. I ought to blush with shame and confusion.

Polidor. I think such an action culpable, and don't pretend to excuse the guilty.

Alberto. And yet heaven is merciful to the vilest sinners.

Polidor. That's what ought to be consider'd by you.

Alberto. One should be Christian-like.

Polidor. That's most certain.

Alberto. Mercy, for heaven's sake, mercy, Signior Polidor!

Polidor. 'Tis I who now implore it of you.

Alberto. Upon my knees I beg it!

Polidor. I ought rather to be in that posture than you.

Alberto. Have some pity on my misfortune.

Polidor. After such an injury I am the suppliant.

Alberto. You break my heart with this goodness.

Polidor. You confound me with so much humility.

Alberto. Once more pardon.

Polidor. Alas! do you pardon.

Alberto. I'm very sorry for this action.

Polidor. And I'm touch'd to the last degree by the same.

Alberto. I presume to conjure you not to let it be made public.

Polidor. Alas, Signior Alberto! I wish nothing else.

Alberto. Let us preserve my honour.

Polidor. Oh! yes, I'm dispos'd to do't.

Alberto. As to the money you must have, you yourself shall determine it.

Polidor. I desire no more than what you are freely willing to give. I leave that entirely to your option, and shall be happy if you are contented.

Alberto. Ha! what a godlike man! what excess of sweetnes!

Polidor. What sweetnes in yourself after such a misfortune!

Alberto. May all your actions prosper.

Polidor. May heaven preserve you.

Alberto. Let us embrace like brothers.

Polidor. I consent to't, with all my heart, and am much rejoiced that all's ended in a happy agreement.

Alberto. I thank heaven for't.

Polidor. Pray don't counterfeit any thing, your resentment gives me room to fear; Lucilia having committed a fault with my son, and as you are powerful both in wealth and friends—

Alberto. Hey! what do you mean by faults, and Lucilia, and my son, and—

Polidor. Enough, let's not begin a uselefs discourse. I own my son is greatly to blame in the affair, nay, if that will be any ease to you, I'll own that he alone is in fault; that your daughter had too refin'd a virtue to have ever made this dishonourable step, without the instigation of a wicked seducer: that the traitor has betray'd her innocent modesty, and thus destroy'd the expectation of your conduct. But since the thing is done, and according to my wishes, we are friends again, let us have nothing of it over again, but repair the offence by the solemnity of a happy alliance.

Alberto aside.] Oh heavens! what a mistake is this! what do I hear? I fall here from one trouble, into another as great. In these different transports I know not what to answer, and if I speak a word, I'm afraid of confounding myself.

Polidor. What are you thinking of, Signior Alberto?

Alberto. Nothing. Let us defer, pray, our conference for a while. I feel a sudden illness, which obliges me to leave you thus abruptly.

S C E N E V.

P O L I D O R alone.

I CAN look into his soul, and read what disturbs him, and though his reason guided him at first, his displeasure is not yet quite appeas'd. The image of the affront returns to him, and he endeavour'd, by leaving me, to disguise the trouble he was tortur'd with. I take part in his confusion, and his grief touches me. A little time must settle his mind: sorrow receives a double addition from being restrained: but here comes the foolish boy.

S C E N E VI.

P O L I D O R, V A L E R E.

P O L I D O R.

I N short, young spark; your fine behaviour grieves your poor old father every moment: you act new wonders every day, and we never hear of anything else.

Valere. What do I act every day, that's so very criminal? By what do I so much merit a father's displeasure?

Polidor. I am, doubtless, a strange man, and of a terrible humour, to accuse so wise and dutiful a child. Why, he lives like a saint; and is in the house at prayers from morning to evening. To say that he perverts the order of nature, and turns day into night, O! 'tis a grand deceit! That he neither regards father nor kindred, upon twenty occasions; horrible falsity! That he was very lately match'd to the daughter of Alberto, by a stol'n wed-ding, without fearing the mighty disorder that would follow: they take him for another, sure! The poor innocent creature does not so much as know what I mean! Oh! thou rascal, whom heaven has sent me as the punishment of my sins; wilt thou always follow thy own imaginations? and shall I never see thee do one wise action before my death? [Exit.

Valere alone, musing.] Whence can all this proceed? my perplex'd mind can find none to imagine it of, but Mascaril: but he'll ne'er confess it to me; I must make use of some address, and curb myself a little in my just passion.

S C E N E VII.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

V A L E R E.

MA SCARIL, my father, whom I just now saw, knows all our secret.

Mascaril. Does he really?

Valere. Yes.

Mascaril. How the deuce could he know it?

Valere. I don't know one on whom to fix my conjecture; but, in short, the business has had such success, that I have all the reason in the world to be transported: he has not said a cross word to me upon't; he excuses my fault, and approves my flame, and I cannot imagine what made him so tractable.

Mascaril. And what would you say to me, Sir, if it was I who had procured this good fortune for you?

Valere. Oh, very well, Sir, I see what you are driving at.

Mascaril. 'Tis I, I tell you, I, that your father knows it from; and who have produc'd this favourable consequence for you.

Valere. Well, but are you really in earnest?

Mascaril. The devil take me if I jest, and if it is not thus.

Valere drawing his fword.] And may he take me, if I do not immediately reward thee for it.

Mascaril. Hah! what now, Sir? I bar surprize!

Valere. Is this the fidelity you promis'd me? Without my counterfeiting, you would never have own'd the trick, which I justly imagin'd you had play'd me. Thou rascal, whose tongue has been too able to provoke my father against me, and utterly ruin me; thou shalt die without saying another word.

Mascaril. Hold, hold, Sir, my soul is not in a good condition for death. Pray now stay, and see the success this adventure will have. I had good reasons which made me reveal a marriage, which you yourself could scarcely conceal: 'twas a master-piece of policy, and you'll find that the issue will condemn the fury you are in. Why should

you vex yourself, if your desires are fully satisfy'd through my care, and an end be put to the constraint you at present lie under?

Valere. And what if all this talk of thine is nothing but flams?

Mascaril. Why then you'll have time enough to kill me. But in short, my projects may prove effectual; heaven will do for its own; and you'll be content in the end, and thank me for my good conduct.

Valere. Well, we shall see. But Lucilia—

Mascaril. Hold, here comes her father.

S C E N E VII.

ALBERTO, VALERE, MASCARIL.

ALBERTO not seeing Valere.

THE more I recover from the perplexity I was in at first, the more I find myself disturb'd at this strange story, which gave such a dangerous change to my fear; for Lucilia maintains that 'tis all a jest, and has talk'd to me in a manner that has taken away all suspicion. — Ha! Sir, is it you whose notorious boldness makes a jest of my honour, and invents this base story?

Mascaril. Pray, Signior Alberto, make use of a little more gentle tone, and don't be so angry with your son-in-law.

Alberto. How! son-in-law, rascal? it is my opinion you have been the chief plotter of these infamous doings; or that the story is all of your own invention.

Mascaril. I see nothing here to put you in a passion.

Alberto. Do you think it right, pray, to defame my daughter, and to bring such a scandal on a whole family?

Mascaril. He's ready to do your will in every thing.

Alberto. What would I have him to do but tell the truth? If he had conceiv'd a passion for Lucilia, his pursuit of her should have been honourable and handsome; he should have apply'd to her on the side of duty, and should have ask'd her father's leave, and not have recourse to this contrivance, which gives such a sensible stroke to modesty.

Mascaril. What! is not Lucilia privately engaged to my master?

Alberto, No, rascal, nor never shall be so.

Mascaril. Softly; if 'tis true that this thing is done, will you approve of that secret chain?

Alberto. And supposing it to be false, will you be contented to have those rascally bones of yours broken?

Valere. 'Tis easy, Sir, to make it appear to you that he says true.

Alberto. Good, there's another, a worthy master of such a man. O what impudent liars!

Mascaril. As I am a man of honour, 'tis so as I say.

Valere. What could be our aim in making you believe it.

Alberto aside.] They understand one another like pick-pockets in a fair.

Mascaril. But let us come to the proof, and without quarrelling, send for the young lady, and let her speak for herself.

Alberto. And what if she contradicts you?

Mascaril. She'll not do it, Sir, I assure you

Promise but your consent to their love, and I'll expose myself to the severest punishment if she does not with her own mouth confess to you, both the faith she has engaged, and the ardour that urges her.

Alberto. Well, we shall see this presently.

[Goes to knock at his door, Mascaril to Valere.] Come, all will go well.

Alberto. Ho! Lucilia! a word with you.

Valere to Mascaril.] I fear—

Mascaril. Fear nothing.

S C E N E IX.

L U C I L I A, A L B E R T O, V A L E R E,
M A S C A R I L.

M A S C A R I L.

SIGNIOR Alberto, be silent at least. At length, madam, every thing conspires to your heart's happiness, and your father being inform'd of your love, leaves you your husband, and confirms your vows; provided, that banishing all frivolous fears, you will, with your own mouth, corroborate what we have already told him.

Lucilia. What does this impudent rascal say to me?

Mascaril. Good, I'm already honour'd with a fine title.

Lucilia. Pray, Sir, will you be pleased to inform me, what curious frolic was the cause of this gallant story that has been spread about to-day.

Valere. Pardon me, charming creature; but my servant has been babbling, and I find our marriage is discover'd against my will.

Lucilia. Our marriage!

Valere. 'Tis all known, adorable Lucilia, and to endeavour to disguise it is all in vain.

Lucilia. What! the ardour of my passion has made you my husband, has it?

Valere. 'Tis a happiness which ought to make a thousand jealous; but I impute this success of my love much less to the ardour of your passion, than to the goodness of your soul. I must confess that you have reason to be offended. It was a secret you wished to have concealed. In obedience to your commands, I put a restraint upon my transports; but notwithstanding my precaution—

Mascalil. Well, yes, 'twas I; a great mischief indeed.

Lucilia. Was there ever an imposture equal to this? Dare you maintain it in my very presence, and think to obtain me by so vile a stratagem? O the pleasant lover! whose gallant passion would wound my honour because it could not gain my heart, and would move my father, by the strength of a foolish story, to marry me by way of reward to one who loads me with disgrace. Though even every thing contributed to your passion, my father, destiny, and my own inclination, I'd sooner encounter death in its most horrid shape, than be joined to one that thought to obtain me in this manner. Be gone, for if my sex could with decency break out into violence, I would make you tremble for having treated me thus.

Valere to Mascalil.] 'Tis over with us, her anger can't be appeas'd.

Mascalil. Let me speak to her. Hark'e, madam, to what good, pray, is all this grimace now? what's your meaning? and what capricious tran-

Sport makes you thus obstinate against your own wishes? If your father was a passionate man, good; but he suffers reason to govern him, and he himself told me that a confession would gain his affection for you. I believe indeed you feel some little shame to make a free acknowledgment of the love that you have yielded to; but if it has lost you a little liberty, all's adjusted again by a good marriage; and though your weakness may be a little blameable, yet there's no murder in the case. We all know that flesh is frail sometimes, and that a maid is neither stock nor stone. You were not the first who has made a mistake, that's certain, and won't be the last, I dare believe.

Lucilia. What! can you hear this insolent talk, and not say a word to these indignities?

Alberto. What would you have me say? This affair puts me quite beside myself.

Mascaril. I swear, madam, you ought to have confess'd all before now.

Lucilia. Confess'd what?

Mascaril. What? why what has pass'd between my master and you; a fine jest indeed!

Lucilia. And what has pass'd, audacious monster, between your master and I?

Mascaril. You ought, I think, to know that better than I; and this night was too sweet a one to you, for one to believe you could forget it so soon.

Lucilia. This is bearing too much, father, from an impudent footman. [Gives him a box on the ear.

SCENE X.

ALBERTO, VALERE, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

THINK she gave me a box on the ear, did she not?

Alberto. Be gone, villain; her hand has done an action which her father praises her for.

Mascaril. And notwithstanding that, may the devil take me this instant if I have said any thing but what's true.

Alberto. And notwithstanding that, may I lose an ear if you carry on this impudence much further!

Mascaril. Shall I bring two witnesses to justify me?

Alberto. Shall I bring two of my servants to cudgel you?

Mascaril. Their report will corroborate mine.

Alberto. Their arms may make up for the impotence of mine.

Mascaril. I tell you that Lucilia behaves thus out of bashfulness.

Alberto. I tell you that I'll have reason for all this.

Mascaril. Do you know Ormin the fat scrivener?

Alberto. Do you know Grimpant the hangman?

Mascaril. And Simon the tailor formerly so much follow'd?

Alberto. And the gibbet set up in the middle of the market?

Mascaril. You'll see they will confirm the truth of this marriage.

Alberto. You shall see your destiny finish'd by them.

Mascaril. These were witnesses to their mutual agreement.

Alberto. 'Tis these who shall shortly revenge me on thee.

Mascaril. And these eyes saw them interchange their promise.

Alberto. And these eyes shall see thee take a swing.

Mascaril. And, for a token, Lucilia had a black veil on.

Alberto. And, for a token, one may see the gallows on your forehead.

Mascaril. O! obstinate old man!

Alberto. O cursed rascal! you may thank my age, which prevents my punishing the affront you have given me upon the spot; but depend upon it, you shall receive your reward from other hands.

S C E N E XI.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

V A L E R E.

WELL, now, you see the fine success of —

Mascaril. I understand, at half a word, what you mean; every one is arming against me; I see cudgels and gibbets preparing for me on every side: therefore that I may be at rest from this extreme disorder, I'll go and cast myself headlong from

rock, if in the despair with which my heart is incens'd, I can meet with one that is high enough to please me. Farewel, Sir.

Valere. No, no, you shall not slip off in this manner; if you do die, I expect it shall be in my sight.

Mascalil. I can't die when any body looks at me; and by that means my death would be delay'd.

Valere. Follow me, traitor, follow me; my ingr'd love will shew thee if 'tis a jesting matter.

Mascalil. Unhappy Mascalil! to what evils dost thou see thyself condemn'd to-day for another's faults!



ACT IV. SCENE I.

ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

FROSINA.

IT is an unlucky accident.

Ascanius. Ah, my dear Frosina, fate has absolutely decreed my ruin: this affair, now 'tis come to the pitch it is, will certainly not stop there: it will go through with it; and Lucilia and Valere, surpriz'd at the novelty of such a mystery, will one day search farther into it, by which means all my projects will prove abortive. For, in short, whether Alberto has part in the stratagem, or he himself be deceiv'd with the rest of the world, if it ever happens that the discovery of my condition should put into the hand of others all the wealth he has engross'd in his own, judge you whether

he'll have cause to endure my presence; no, no, the hopes of interest once lost he will then withdraw all his tenderness, and abandon me to my abject condition; and my lover, though now he may have some affection for me, will soon change it into contempt; and never consent to marry a girl without either family or fortune.

Frosina. I think this is reasoning right; but these reflections should have come sooner: who has hid this light from you till now? There was no need of being a great conjurer, to see from the first moment of your design upon him, all that your genius never found out till to-day. The action spoke it; and since I have known it, I could never foresee any better issue it would have.

Ascanius. What shall I do at laist? my trouble cannot be equall'd; put yourself in my place, and tell me how you would act.

Frosina. If I take your place, 'twill belong to you to give me advice upon this disgrace: for now I am you, and you are me; counsel me, Frosina, in the condition I am in, what remedy to think of; tell me, I beg you.

Ascanius. Alas! don't treat it with raillery; 'tis taking but little part in my piercing sorrow to laugh, when you see the terms I am on.

Frosina. Ascanius, I am very sensible of your distress, and would do all I possibly could to extricate you out of it: but what can I do after all? I see very little likelihood of turning this affair to your advantage.

Ascanius. If no assistance can be had, I must die.

Frosina. Lack-a-day, 'tis time enough for that; death's a remedy to be found whenever one pleases,

and one ought to make use of it when all other means fail.

Ascanius. No, no, Frosina, no; if your propitious counsel does not conduct my destiny amongst these precipices, I abandon myself wholly to despair.

Frosina. A sudden thought has just come into my head: I'll go and see if—But here comes Erastus, who may disturb us: we will talk of this business as we walk; come let us retire.

S C E N E II.

E R A S T U S, G R O S - R E N A R D.

E R A S T U S.

Again, repuls'd?

Gros-Renard. Never was ambassador less hearken'd to: I had no sooner told her that you desir'd a moment's conversation with her, but she answer'd haughtily, Go, go; I value him as much as I do thee; tell him he may go about his business; and upon this fine speech turn'd her face from me, and went on: Marinetta too, with a disdainful look, bid me be gone for a tun-belly'd fellow, and threw the dør in my face: so that your fortune and mine have nothing to reproach one another with.

Erastus. Ungrateful creature! to receive with so much haughtiness the speedy return of a heart justly provok'd! What! is the first transport of a passion, which had so much the appearance of being abus'd, unworthy of excuse? And ought my lively love to have been insensible in that fatal moment to the happiness of a rival? Would any

other in my place not have acted just as I have done, or been less surpriz'd at so much boldness? Am I too late in leaving my just suspicions? I have not waited for protestations on her part; and, though nobody can yet tell what to think of it, my impatient heart yields all its glory to her; it endeavours to excuse her, and can she so little perceive the greatness of my passion through this profound respect? So far from confirming my foul, and furnishing it with arms against the alarms a rival tries to give it, the ungrateful woman abandons me to my excessive jealousy, and refuses me all message, writing, or speech. Ah! an affection has certainly very little violence that's capable of remembering so small an offence; and this disgust, which is so ready to arm itself with rigour, sufficiently discovers to me the bottom of her heart, and what value now all that her caprice has flatter'd my passion with, ought to be to me. No, I'll no longer be the slave of one who has so little love for me; and since she shews such an extreme coldness whether she keeps one or not, I'll do the same.

Gros-Renard. And so will I: let us both be angry, and put our love into the list of old sins; we must learn how to live with this wavering sex, and make them feel that we have some courage. He that will bear their contempt will be sure to have it; if we had the wit to set a value upon ourselves, the women would not be so very haughty: O how insolent are they through our fault! I would be hang'd if we should not see them cling about our necks more than we desired, if it was not for those servile submissions which the generality of men, now-a-days, continually spoil them with.

Erastus. For my part, contempt shocks me a-

bove any thing; and to punish hers, by one as great, I am resolved to cherish a new passion in my heart.

Gros-Renard. And I'll perplex myself no more about women; I renounce them all, and wish you would do the same: for, d'ye see, master o'mine, woman is, as one may say, a kind of animal hard to be known, and whose nature is greatly inclined to mischief: and as an animal is always an animal, and will never be any thing but an animal, though its life lasted for an hundred thousand years; so, without raillery, a woman is always a woman, and will never be any thing but a woman, as long as the world shall endure. Wherefore, as a certain Greek author says, a woman's head may be compared to the unstable sand: for pray mark well this reasoning, which is most weighty: for as the head is the chief of the body, and as the body without a chief is worse than a beast; if the chief has not a good agreement with the head, so that every thing is not well regulated by its compass, we see certain confusions arise: the brutal part then endeavours to rule over the sensitive, and see one pull one way, the other another; one calls for soft, the other for hard; in short every thing goes it knows not how: this is to shew that here below, according to interpretation, the head of a woman is like a weather-cock on the top of a house, which turns about with every wind; wherefore cousin Aristotle often compares her to the sea, whence it comes to pass that people say, that nothing is so inconstant as the sea; or by comparison, for comparison makes us comprehend a reason distinctly, and we studious folks love a comparison much better than a similitude: by comparison then, if you please, master,

as we see that the sea, when a storm rifes, begins to foam, the wind blows and rages, billows against billows make a horrible confusion, and the ship, in spite of the mariners teeth, goes sometimes down to the cellar, and sometimes up into the garret: so when a woman gets her whims and foolish fancies into her head, a sudden tempest arises, which will break out by certain—words, and then a—certain wind, which by—certain waves, in—a certain manner, like a heap of sand—when—In short, a woman is worse than the devil.

Eraſtus. Very well argued indeed!

Gros-Renard. Pretty tolerable, thanks to my stars; but I see them, Sir, coming this way. Stand firm, be ſure.

Eraſtus. Don't be in the least uneasy about it.

Gros-Renard. I am afraid that her eyes will bewitch you.

S C E N E III.

LUCILIA, ERASTUS, MARINETTA,
GROS-RENARD.

MARINETTA.

I SEE him there yet: but don't yield.

Lucilia. Don't you ſuspect me of weakness in this point.

Marinetta. He comes to us.

Eraſtus. Think not, madam, I am coming again to talk to you of my paſſion; it is all over; I'm reſolved to cure myſelf, and know very well how much my heart has poſſeſſed of yours. Such de-termined reſentiment only for the ſhadow of an offence has too plainly diſcovered your indifference

to me, and I ought to shew you, that contempt above all things wounds a generous soul. I'll own that my eyes have observed in yours, charms which they never found in any other, and the rapture which my chains gave me, would have made me prefer them to proffer'd scepters: yes, my love for you was undoubtedly extreme, I lived wholly in you; and I'll even own that after all, perhaps, I shall still have difficulty enough to disengage myself, notwithstanding the affront: it is possible, that notwithstanding the cure I am attempting, my heart may, for a long time, bleed with this wound, and that, freed from a yoke which was the occasion of all my happiness, I shall resolve never to love again. But in short, it is no matter, and since you have, with the most inveterate hatred, repulsed a heart which love brought back to you, this is the last importunity that you shall ever have from the man you so much despise.

Lucilia. You might have dispensed with giving me this last too.

Eraftus. Well, madam, very well, you shall be satisfied: I here break off all acquaintance with you, and break it off for ever, since you will have it so; and may I lose my life when I again desire to converse with you!

Lucilia. So much the better; you'll oblige me.

Eraftus. No, no, don't be afraid that I'll falsify my word; for though my heart may be weak enough to retain your faithless image, yet you shall never see me return.

Lucilia. It would be much in vain if you did.

Eraftus. I would sheath my sword in my breast should I ever be guilty of such excessive meanness as to see you again after this unworthy treatment.

Lucilia. Be it so; let's talk no more of it then.

Eraftus. Yes, yes, let's talk no more on't; and to cut off here all superfluous wrangling, and give you a certain proof, ungrateful woman, I'll for ever throw off your chain, I'll keep nothing which may renew an image which it is necessary for me to efface from my mind. There is your picture; it presents to the eye a hundred bright charms which you are mistress of, but it conceals underneath them an hundred as monstrous faults; and in short, it is an imposture which I restore you.

Gros-Renard. Good.

Lucilia. Not to be behind hand with you, there is the diamond which you forc'd me to take.

Marinetta. Very well.

Eraftus. Here's likewise a bracelet of yours.

Lucilia. And this agate is yours, which you made me put in a seal.

Eraftus taking a letter out of his pocket and reading.

" You love me with an extreme love, Eraftus,
" and want to know my heart: if I don't love E-
" rafus so much, at least I am pleased that Eraf-
" tus loves me so well." LUCILIA.

You assure me by this that you approve my service. Thus I treat the false evidence of a pretended sincerity. [Tears the letter.]

Lucilia reads.

" I'm ignorant of the destiny of my ardent love,
" and how long I shall suffer; but this know, that
" I shall always love the amiable Lucilia."

ERASTUS.

This assures me of your love for ever; both the hand and the letter told a lie. [Tears the letter.]

Gros-Renard. Go on.

Eraftus. This is yours? enough--the same fortune. [Tears it.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] Be firm..

Lucilia. I should be sorry to spare one of them..

Gros-Renard to Eraftus.] Don't let her have the last word.

Marinetta. Hold out bravely to the end..

Lucilia. Well, there's the rest.

Eraftus. 'Tis well, here ends every thing; and may I be destroy'd, if I don't keep my word.

Lucilia. Confound me, heaven, if mine is frivolous.

Eraftus. Farewel, then..

Lucilia. Farewel.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] Nobly done, madam!

Gros-Renard to Eraftus.] You triumph.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] Come, remove out of his sight.

Gros-Renard to Eraftus.] Retire, after this bold stroke.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] What do you stay for now?

Gros-Renard to Eraftus.] What would you have more?

Eraftus. Ah! Lucilia, Lucilia! a heart like mine will regret this, and I know it well.

Lucilia. Ah! Eraftus, Eraftus! a heart like yours may be easily repair'd by another.

Eraftus. No, no, search all the world over, you will never find one so fond, so true;—I don't say this to move you; I should be in the wrong now to form any such desire; my most ardent respects were not able to oblige you, you had a mind to break with me; I must think of it no more: but

no-body after me, whatever they may pretend, will ever have so tender a passion for you.

Lucilia. Those who truly love, treat a mistress in another manner, and do not form a rash judgment of her honour.

Eraustus. Those who love, Lucilia, are apt to be jealous on the slightest cause of suspicion:—but never can wish to destroy the person they love, as you do me, ungrateful as you are fair!

Lucilia. Pure jealousy is more respectful.

Eraustus. We regard with a gentler eye an amorous offence.

Lucilia. Your passion, Eraustus, was never sincere.

Eraustus. No, Lucilia, you never lov'd me.

Lucilia. Oh! that torments you much, I suppose; it would have been happier for me, perhaps, if I—But let us leave this superfluous talk; I don't say what my thoughts are upon it.

Eraustus. Why?

Lucilia. Because we break off acquaintance with one another, and this is not a proper season I think for it.

Eraustus. Do we break off acquaintance?

Lucilia. Yes, to be sure; why is it not done?

Eraustus. And you see it with a satisfy'd mind.

Lucilia. Like you.

Eraustus. Like me?

Lucilia. 'Tis certainly weakness to let people see that we are griev'd at the loss of them.

Eraustus. But 'tis you, cruel woman, that would have it so.

Lucilia. I? not at all; 'tis you who had fully resolv'd upon't.

Eraftus. I? I did it because I thought it would please you.

Lucilia. No, you had a mind to give yourself satisfaction.

Eraftus. But what if my heart should wish to resume its former chain, insulted as it has been? if it should sue to you for pardon?

Lucilia. No, no, don't do it; my weakness is too great, I should be afraid I might too soon grant your request.

Eraftus. Oh! you cannot too soon grant it me, nor can I, upon that fear, too soon ask it. Consent to it, madam; so pure a flame ought to remain immortal for your own sake. In short, I ask it; pray grant me this obliging pardon.

Lucilia. Lead me home.

S C E N E IV.

MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

OH! cowardly woman!

Gros-Renard. Oh! weak-hearted man!

Marinetta. I blush with indignation.

Gros-Renard. I swell with rage: don't imagine that I'll yield thus.

Marinetta. And don't you think to find such a dupe in me.

Gros-Renard. Come on, come on, and see the effects of my wrath.

Marinetta. I am not the person you take me for; you have not to do with my silly mistress. There's a fine phiz indeed to be in love with! It is very likely indeed that a young girl like me should—

Gros-Renard. Ay, ay, do you take it thus? Here, here, there's your fine gallant point, and half penny ribband without your seeking it in that manner: it shan't have the honour of being round my neck any more.

Marinetta. And to shew thee that I despise thee, there's thy half hundred of rusty needles which thou gavest me yesterday with so much bragging.

Gros-Renard. And take thy knife too, a thing most rich and rare; it cost thee sixpence when thou made me a present of it.

Marinetta. Take thy scissars with the brass chain, which you swore was pinchbeck.

Gros-Renard. I forgot the piece of cheese you gave me the day before yesterday, here; I would I could bring up the broth you made me sup, that I might have nothing of yours.

Marinetta. I have none of thy letters about me now, but as soon as I get home I'll make a bonfire of them.

Gros-Renard. And do you know what I shall do with yours?

Marinetta. Take care you never come begging to me again.

Gros-Renard. To cut off every way of being reconcil'd, we must break a straw; a straw broken concludes an affair between people of honour: so no more of your oglings, I beseech you, for they'll be all thrown away upon me. I'm resolv'd to be very angry.

Marinetta. Nor any of your leering and squeezing; I'm too much provok'd.

Gros-Renard. Here break; this is the way of never recanting again; break; do you laugh, you jade?

Marinetta. Yes, you make me laugh.

Gros-Renard. Plague take your grin! there's all my anger dulcify'd already; what say you to't? Shall we fall out or not?

Marinetta. As you will.

Gros-Renard. Nay, 'tis as you will.

Marinetta. As you yourself will.

Gros-Renard. Can you consent never to have me love you?

Marinetta. I? what you please.

Gros-Renard. What you yourself please. Say—

Marinetta. I'll not speak.

Gros-Renard. Nor I neither.

Marinetta. Nor I.

Gros-Renard. Come, let us give over this grimace; shake hands, I pardon you.

Marinetta. And I forgive you.

Gros-Renard. Bless me! how I'm bewitch'd to her charms!

Marinetta. What a fool is Marinetta when her Gros-Renard's in the case!



A C T V. S C E N E I.

M A S C A R I L.

WHEN darkness reigns through all the town, I'll go to Lucilia's chamber, quoth my master: go quickly therefore and prepare the dark lanthorn and necessary arms. When he said these words to me, I thought it sounded as if he had said, Go quickly and get a halter to hang thee with. But come on, master; for in the astonish-

ment which such an order threw me into at first, I had not time to be able to answer you: but I'll talk with you now, and confound you too; therefore make ready for your defence, and let us argue the case coolly. Would you, d'ye say, go and see Lucilia to-night? Yes, Mascalil. And what d'ye propose to do when you come there? All that a lover should do to procure himself satisfaction. The action of a man who has very little brains to go and risque his carcals without any occasion. But do you know what motive induces me to this design? Lucilia is anger'd. Well, so much the worse for her. But Love will have me to grasp her. But Love is a fool, and don't know what he says. Will this Love, pray, guard us from an enraged rival, or father, or brother? Dost thou think any of them intend to do us mischief? Yes, indeed, I do think so: and especially this rival. Whatever happens, Mascalil, what I trust to is, that we shall go well arm'd, and if any body quarrels with us we must have a skirmish. Ay, but that's what your footman does not in the least pretend to: I skirmish! Lord! am I a Rolando, or some Ferragus? You know me little. When I consider, I who am so dear to myself, that two fingers breadth of cold iron in this body would be enough to send a poor mortal to his grave; I am disgusted with this strange method; but thou shalt be arm'd cap-a-pe. So much the worse, I shall be less nimble to get into the wood; and besides, there's no armour so well join'd, which a villainous point may not slip into. Oh! at this rate thou'l be posted for a coward. With all my heart, provided I sleep in a whole skin. At table you may count me for four, if you will; but you must count me for nothing, when

fighting's in the case: in short, if the other world has charms for you; for my part, I think the air of this is very sweet: I am not so greedy of death and wounds, and you shall play the fool alone, I assure you.

S C E N E II.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

V A L E R E.

NEVER was day so tedious as this. Sure the sun has forgot himself!—and he has such a course to run yet, before he reaches his bed, that I believe he'll ne'er accomplish it: his flowness distracts me.

Mascaril. And this eagerness is to go in the dark, to run a groping after some ugly incumbrance— You see Lucilia is obstinate in her repulses—

Valere. Make no superfluous harangues to me now: were I to meet with a hundred deadly ambuscades, the pain I feel from her displeasure is such, that I'll either appease it, or end my fate: 'tis a thing resolved on.

Mascaril. I approve this transport; but the mischief is, Sir, that we must get in secretly.

Valere. Very well.

Mascaril. And I am afraid I shall be an incumbrance to you.

Valere. How so?

Mascaril. I'm troubled with a violent cough, the impertinent noise of which will occasion your being discover'd: every moment—[Coughs.] You see how violent it is.

Valere. This distemper will go off, take but some juice of liquorish.

Mascaril. I don't think 'twill go off, Sir. I should be overjoy'd to go along with you, but I should be mortally griev'd, if I should be the cause of any misfortune's befalling my dear master.

S C E N E III.

V A L E R E, R A P I E R E, M A S C A R I L.

R A P I E R E.

SIR, I was just now kindly inform'd that Era-
stus is greatly enrag'd against you, and that Alberto talks likewise of breaking the bones of your Mascaril on account of some lies being told of his daughter.

Mascaril. I? I stand for nothing in all this confusion. What have I done, to have my bones broke? am I guardian then of the virginity of all the girls in the town, that I'm thus threaten'd? have I any power over temptation? and can I help it if their hearts prompt them to—

Valere. Oh! they'll not be so mischievous as they say; and Eraſtus won't have so great a bargain of us, whatever fine heat his love may have rais'd in him.

Rapiere. If you should have any occasion, my arm's entirely at your fervice; you know of old that I'm a staunch blade.

Valere. I'm oblig'd to you, Mr. Rapiere, for your offer.

Rapiere. I have likewise two friends I can give you, whom I can answer for, and on whom you may safely rely.

Mascaril. Accept of them, Sir.

Valere. You are too complaisant.

Rapiere. Little Giles might have likewise assisted us, if a sad accident had not taken him from us. It was a great pity, Sir! a man of service too! You know the trick justice serv'd him: he died like a Cæsar, and when the executioner broke him on the wheel, he could not make him slip a word.

Valere. Mr. Rapiere, it is certainly a great loss;—but as to the assistance you mention, I must beg leave to decline accepting it.

Rapiere. Be it so; but be inform'd that he seeks you, and may prove a scurvy match for you.

Valere. And I, to shew you how much I fear him, will myself, if he seeks me, offer him what he demands; and will immediately go through all the town and find him out, if he is to be met with.

S C E N E IV.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

M A S C A R I L.

ARE you mad, Sir, to tempt heaven in this manner? Was there ever such presumption? Lack-a-day! you see how they threaten us. How on every side——

Valere. What are you looking at there?

Mascaril. I smell a cudgel that way: in short, if my prudence is now to be trusted to, don't let us be so obstinate as to remain in the street; let us go and shut ourselves up.

Valere. Shut ourselves up? Darest thou, rascal,

propose such a base action to me? Come along, and without more words resolve to follow me.

Mascaril. Alack, Sir! my dear master, life is so sweet! one can die but once; and 'tis for such a long time——

Valere. I shall knock thee o' the head, if I hear any more: here comes Ascanius; let's leave this place; we must learn what side he'll resolve to take: however come along with me, and let us take out of the house what we shall want to fight with.

Mascaril. It is an employment I have no great love for: curse on love, and those cursed wenches who will be tasting it; and then look as if butter would not melt in their mouth.

S C E N E V.

A S C A N I U S, F R O S I N A.

A S C A N I U S.

IS it really true, Frosina, or do I dream? Pray tell me the whole exactly.

Frosina. You'll know the particulars of it soon enough; be patient; these sort of accidents are commonly but too often repeated from time to time; 'tis enough for you to know that after this will which requir'd a boy to be born to make it stand good, the last time Alberto's wife was with child she was deliver'd of you, and she having long before underhand concerted her design, chang'd you for a son of Agnes, the nosegay-woman, who gave you as her own to my mother to nurse: this little innocent being snatch'd away by death, some ten months after, Alberto being absent, the fear of

her husband, and maternal love, gave birth to a new stratagem: his wife then secretly took her true daughter again, you was changed into him who supply'd your place, and the death of the son which was taken into your family, was disgui'd to Alberto for that of his daughter. This is the whole mystery of your condition, which your pretended mother has hitherto concealed: she gives reasons for it, and may have others, in which your interest does not appear to be the only one she consulted: in short, this visit, from which I had so little hopes, has been of more service to your love than could have been imagined: this Agnes disowns you, and the revealing this secret became necessary on account of your other affair: we have both of us inform'd your father of it: a letter of his wife's has confirm'd the whole; and pushing our point yet farther, a little good fortune being joined to our running, we have so well adjusted the interests of Alberto and Polidor, and unfolded the mystery to the latter so very gently, that we might not make things appear too terrible at first, and in a word, to tell you all, so prudently dispos'd his mind to an accommodation, that he shews as much desire as your father to confirm the knots, which your levity ty'd.

Ascanius. Ah, Frosina! what joy do you lead me into, and what do I not owe to your fortunate care!

Frosina. Moreover, the good man is in a humour to make himself merry, and has forbid us to say any thing of it yet to his son.

SCENE VI.

POLIDOR, ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

POLIDOR.

Daughter, since I must now call you so, come to my arms! I know the secret which this habit conceal'd: you have done a bold action, wherein you have discovered so much wit and contrivance that I forgive it you, and think my son will be happy when he shall know the object of his love. You are worthy the arms of a monarch, and I'll assure him so: but here he comes; let us be merry upon the adventure: go and bring all your people quickly.

Ascanius. My obedience, Sir, shall be the first compliment I make you.

SCENE VII.

POLIDOR, VALERE, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL to Valere.

DISGRACES are often revealed by heaven: I have dream'd to-night of pearls unstrung, and broken eggs; I assure you, Sir, this dream has frightened me vastly.

Valere. Cowardly rascal!

Polidor. Valere, a combat's coming on wherein all your valour will be necessary.

Mascaril. And will no-body stir to hinder people from cutting one another's throats? For my part, I would willingly: however, Sir, if any fatal accident should befall your son, don't blame me for it.

Polidor. No, no, in this case I myself shall persuade him to do what he ought.

Mascaril. Unnatural father!

Valere. This sentiment, Sir, shews you to be a man of honour; and I revere you for it. I might have offended you, and am to blame to have done all this without a father's consent; but however angry you may be with me, nature will always be most prevalent, and you judge of me according to the dictates of honour, in believing that I am not to be terrified at Erastus's threats.

Polidor. They made me just now afraid of his threats; but things have since chang'd their face: and you'll be attack'd by a stronger enemy, without being able to fly from him.

Mascaril. Is there no way of accommodation?

Valere. I fly from him? Heaven forbid! But pray who is this very formidable enemy?

Polidor. Ascanius.

Valere. Ascanius?

Polidor. Yes, and I am expecting him here every minute.

Valere. He, who has faithfully promis'd to serve me?

Polidor. Yes, 'tis he who intends to have a stroke with you; and is resolv'd that a single combat, in the field where honour calls you, shall determine your quarrel.

Mascaril. He's a brave man; he knows that noble minds never desire to bring other people into unnecessary danger. Thank heaven I am clear of this business.

Polidor. In short, you are accus'd of an imposture, the resentment of which appear'd to me very reasonable; so that Alberto and I have agreed that

you shall give Alcarius satisfaction for the affront: but that it should be publicly, and without any delay in the formality requisite in such a case.

Valere. And has Lucilia, father, out of a harden'd heart—

Polidor. Lucilia marries Erastus, and likewise condemns you; and the better to prove your story to be false, is resolv'd that the marriage be performed before your own eyes.

Valere. Hah! this impudence is provoking indeed: certainly she has lost all sense of faith, conscience, and honour.

S C E N E VIII.

ALBERTO, POLIDOR, LUCILIA, ERASTUS,
VALERE, MASCARIL.

ALBERTO.

WELL! where are the combatants? they are bringing ours, have you prepared yours for the encounter?

Valere. Yes, yes; here, I am ready, since you will force me to't. And if I have at all found cause to hesitate, a remainder of respect made me do it, and not the valour of the arm which opposes me. But I'm urg'd too far, that respect is at an end; my mind is resolv'd on the utmost extremity; and such a strange perfidy appears, that my love must boldly revenge itself. [To Lucilia.] Not that I design to pretend to you again, madam; no, my former love is now swallowed up in wrath, and when I have made your shame public, your guilty marriage shan't in the least disturb me. Go, this proceeding, Lucilia, is odious: scarce can I

believe it from the report of mine eyes; 'tis shewing yourself an enemy to all modesty, and you ought to die for shame.

Lucilia. Such talk as this might concern me, if I had not one at hand to revenge my cause. Here comes Ascanius, who will presently make you change your note.

SCENE THE LAST.

ALBERTO, POLIDOR, ASCANIUS, LUCILIA,
ERASTUS, VALERE, FROSINA, MARI-
NETTA, GROS-RENARD, MASCARIL.

VALERE.

HE shall not do it, though he join'd twenty other arms to his own. I am sorry he defends a guilty sister, but since his error makes him quarrel with me, we'll give him satisfaction, and you too, my brave Sir.

Eraſtus. I should have been concern'd in this; but as Ascanius has taken the affair upon himself, I'll have nothing more to do with it, but leave it to him.

Valere. This is prudently done; precaution is always seasonable; but—

Eraſtus. He'll give us all satisfaction upon you.

Valere. He?

Polidor. Don't deceive yourself in the affair, you don't know yet what a strange young fellow Ascanius is.

Alberto. He's now ignorant of it; but he'll make him sensible of it in a little time.

Valere. Come on then, that he may make me sensible of it now.

Marineita. What, publicly?

Gros-Renard. That would not be decent.

Valere. Do you make a jest of me? I'll break the head of any one that laughs. But let us see the end.

Ascanius. No, no, I'm not so mischievous as they make me; and in this adventure I shall rather shew my weakness than any thing else. Heaven who disposes of us did not give me a heart to hold out against you, but reserved it an easy conquest to you to finish the fate of Lucilia's brother. Yes, far from boasting the power of his arm, Ascanius comes to receive death from you; nay, would gladly die, if his death could conduce to your satisfaction, by giving you a wife in the presence of all this company, who cannot justly belong to any one but you.

Valere. No, after such perfidiousness and impudence, though all the world should—

Ascanius. Ah! Valere, suffer me to tell you, that the heart which is engaged to you can be accus'd of no crime against you: her love is still pure, and her constancy extreme; and I take your own father himself to witness it.

Polidor. Yes, son, since we have now sufficiently ridiculed your fury, it is now time to undeceive you. She to whom you are bound by oath is conceal'd under the habit you there see. An affair of money caus'd this disguise in her infancy, which deceives so many people; and love has lately caused another, which deceiv'd you, in joining their family to ours. 'Don't look round upon every body thus, I now make a serious relation to you. Yes, in a word, 'tis she, whose crafty address obtain'd your vows in the night under Lucilia's name,

and who, by this stratagem, which none apprehended, has sow'd so much perplexity amongst you. But since Ascanius now gives place to Dorothea, we must see all imposture taken off of your love, and by a more sacred knot strengthen the first.

Alberto. This is the single combat by which you are to repair your offence with us, and which no edict has ever forbid.

Polidor. This event gives you confusion; but 'twould be in vain for you to hesitate upon it.

Valere. No, no, I would not think of guarding myself against it. If this adventure surprizes me, 'tis a surprize that pleases me, and I find myself seized at once with wonder, love, and delight. Is it possible that those eyes—

Alberto. That habit, dear Valere, won't admit of any fine speeches you may make her. She shall retire, and change it, and in the mean time you shall know the particulars of this accident.

Valere. To you, madam, I have many excuses to make; but the mistake I lay under—

Lucilia. 'Tis an easy matter to forget that injury.

Alberto. Come, this compliment will do well at home, and we shall have leisure all of us to compliment one another.

Eraurus. But hold, though we are all satisfied, there is something yet left undone. To whom must Marinetta belong? To Mascaril, or Gros-Renard? This affair, I imagine, will require some bloodshed before it can be determined.

Mascaril. No, my blood fits too well in my body; let him marry her in peace, 'twill be nothing to me. Considering the humour that I know my

dear Marinetta is of, marriage won't shut the door against courtship.

Marinetta. And dost thou think I'll make thee my gallant? As for a husband, 'tis no matter, we ought to take him such as he is, one don't there stand so much upon ceremony; but a gallant should be a pretty fellow.

Gros-Renard. Hark'e, when marriage has made us two one, I insist upon your being deaf to all sparks.

Mascaril. Do you think, brother, to marry her for yourself alone?

Gros-Renard. You judge right; I'll have a virtuous wife, or I'll make a blessed noise.

Mascaril. Ah! lack-a-day, you'll be as quiet as the rest of the married tribe. These people who are so severe and critical before matrimony, often degenerate into pacific husbands.

Marinetta. Don't in the least doubt my fidelity, dear husband. I abhor flattery. I'll let you know all the gallants I shall have.

Mascaril. Oh! a fine practice! a husband made a confident.

Marinetta. Hold your tongue, villain.

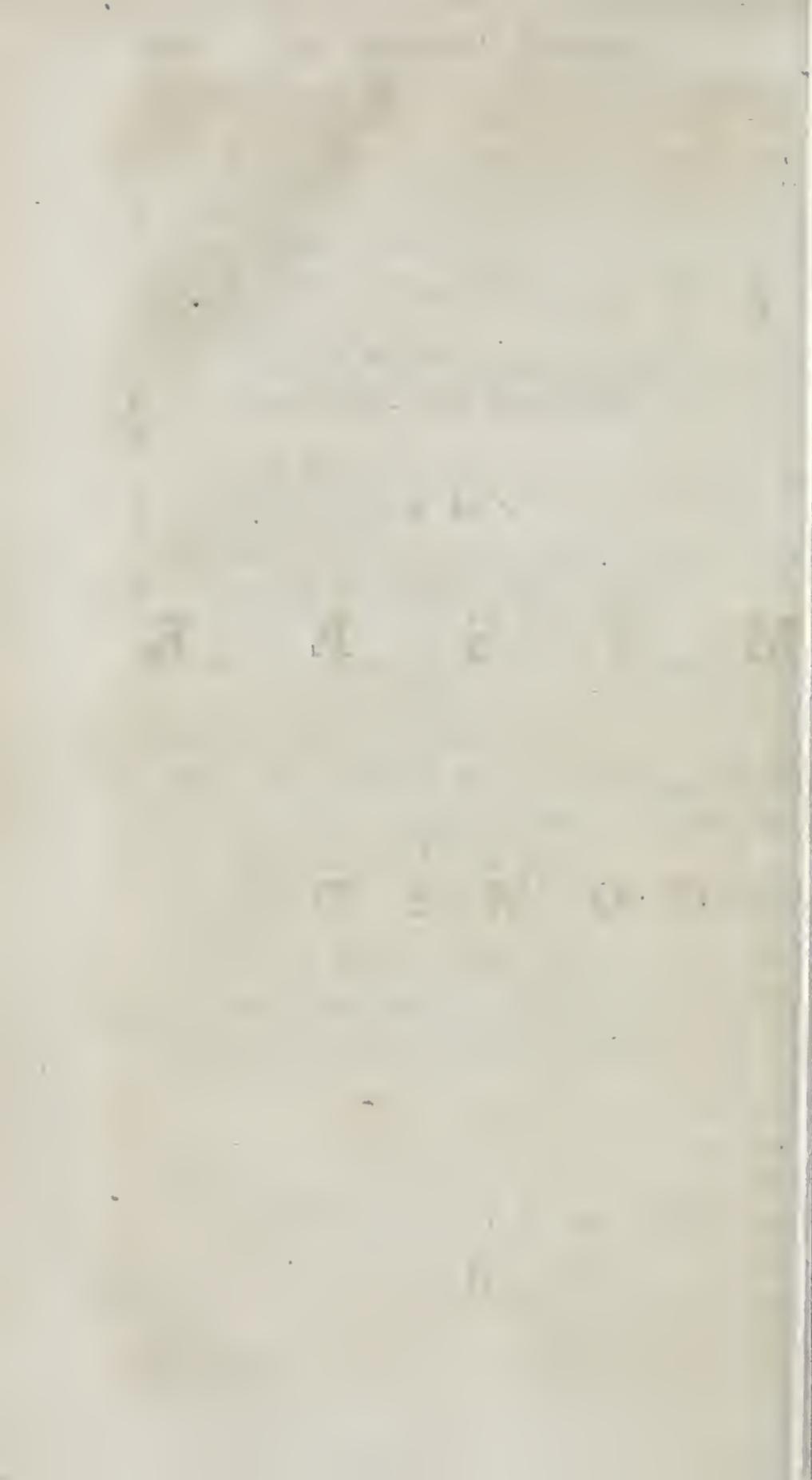
Alberto. For a third time, I say, let us go in, and enjoy our conversation more freely.

THE MISTER.

M I S E R.

A.

COMEDY.



The M I S E R, a Comedy of Five Acts, acted at the Theatre of the Palace-Royal, the 9th of September 1668.

THE merit of the MISER was obliged to give way to the general prejudice for some time; the author, who was obliged to drop it the seventh time of its being performed, brought it upon the stage again in 1668. People were obliged to agree, that the actions of men in common life might be very lively painted in elegant prose, and that the constraint of versification, which sometimes heightens a thought by the happy turn it gives room for, may likewise sometimes be the occasion of losing that warmth and life which flows from the freedom of a familiar style. [In short, there is a continued thread of discourse dictated by nature, which is altered and weakened by the least change of words.]

As soon as this prejudice was worn off, the author had justice done him. The proposal made to the miser to marry his daughter without a portion, the carrying off the casket, the passion of the old fellow when he was robbed, his mistake with respect to his daughter's lover, whom he believed to be the thief that deprived him of his treasure, the equivocal meaning of the word casket, are the chief passages that Moliere has drawn from Plautus. But Plautus can only correct men who do not take advantage of the resorts that accidents give them against poverty. Euclion, who was poor by birth, still passed as such, notwithstanding he had found a pot full of gold; his whole concern was to hide the treasure which his avarice would not suffer

him to make use of. The French poet embraced a more enlarged and useful subject: he represented the miser under different shapes: Harpagon was not willing to appear either rich or avaricious, though he was both. The desire of keeping his wealth, by expending as little as he possibly could, is the same thing as the insatiable desire of amassing more; this stinginess made him a usurer even to his own son. He is in love through avarice, and through avarice ceases to be so.

A C T O R S.

HARPAGON, Father of **Cleanthes** and **Eliza**, and in love with **Mariana**.

ANSELM, Father of **Valere** and **Mariana**.

CLEANTHES, Son of **Harpagon**, in love with **Mariana**.

ELIZA, Daughter of **Harpagon**.

VALERE, Son of **Anselm**, in love with **Eliza**.

MARIANA, Daughter to **Anselm**.

FROSINA, a woman of intrigue.

MR. SIMON, a broker.

MR. JAMES, Cook and Coachman to **Harpagon**.

LA FLECHE, Servant to **Cleanthes**.

CLAUDIA, Servant to **Harpagon**,

BRINDAVOIN, } **LA MERLUCHE**, } Harpagon's footmen.

A Commissary.

SCENE Paris, in **Harpagon's** house.



T H E

M I S E R.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

V A L E R E, E L I Z A.

V A L E R E.

HOW, lovely Eliza, do you grow melancholy, after the kind assurances you were pleased to give me of your fidelity? I see you sighing, alas! in the midst of my joy! Tell me, is it through regret that you have made me happy? And do you repent that engagement which the warmth of my passion has with great difficulty forc'd from you?

Eliza. No, Valere, I cannot repent of any thing I do for you. I find myself drawn that way by a force too enchanting, and I am not able even to form a wish that what is done should be undone. But to say the truth, the consequence gives me some disquiet; and I am much afraid of loving you a little more than I ought to do.

Valere. Fie! Eliza: what can you fear in the kindness you bear me?

Eliza. Alas! a thousand things at once: the re-

sentment of a father; the reproaches of my family; the censures of the world; but above all, Valere, a change in your affection; the criminal coldness with which those of your sex generally requite the too warm proofs of an innocent love.

Valere. Ah! do me not that wrong, to judge of me by others. Suspect me of any thing, Eliza, rather than of failing in my respects to you. I love you too much for that; and my affection to you shall be as lasting as my life.

Eliza. Ah! Valere, every body talks in the same strain; every man is alike in his words; and 'tis only their actions discover them different.

Valere. Since our actions alone discover what we are, wait at least then, to judge of my heart by them; and don't search out crimes for me, in the unjust fears of a tormenting anticipation: pr'ythee don't kill me with the severe strokes of a cruel suspicion, but allow me time to convince you, by a thousand and a thousand proofs, of the sincerity of my love.

Eliza. Alas! how easily do we suffer ourselves to be persuaded by those we are fond of! Yes, Valere, I look upon your heart as utterly incapable of deceiving me; I believe you love me with a real affection, and that you will always be constant to me: I would not so much as doubt of this; and all that concerns me, is an apprehension of the censures which people may pass on me.

Valere. But why this uneasiness?

Eliza. I should have nothing to fear, would every one look upon you with the same eyes that I do; I see enough in your person to vindicate every thing I do for you. My heart has your merit to plead for its defence, supported by the assistance of

that gratitude with which heaven has bound me to you. I call to mind continually that astonishing danger which first gave rise to our mutual regard; that amazing generosity which made you risque your own life, to snatch mine from the fury of the waves; that most tender concern which you discover'd after you had dragg'd me out of the water; the assiduous homage of that ardent love, which neither time nor difficulties could discourage, and which, making you neglect both kindred and country, detains you in this place, keeps your fortune still disguised in favour of me, and has reduced you, for the sight of me, to take upon you the employment of a servant of my father's. All this has, without doubt, a wonderful effect upon me, and is sufficient, in my eyes, to justify that engagement, which I prevailed upon myself to consent to: but 'tis not enough, perhaps, to justify it to others; and I am not certain of their entering into my sentiments.

Valere. Of all that you have mentioned, 'tis only by my love that I pretend to merit any thing with you; and as to the scruples you have, your father himself takes but too much care to justify you to every one; his excess of avarice, and the austere manner with which he lives with his children, might authorize things yet more strange. Pardon me, charming Eliza, for speaking of him thus before you; you know that on this head one can say nothing good; but in short, if I can, as I hope I shall, find my relations again, we shall have no great trouble to gain him on our side. I expect some tidings of them with great impatience; and if they do not come soon, I myself will go in search of them.

Eliza. Ah! Valere, stir not hence, I intreat you; think only how to work yourself into my father's favour.

Valere. You see how I go about it, and the artful compliance I was forc'd to make use of, to introduce myself into his service; under what mark of sympathy and similitude of sentiments with his, I disguise myself to please him; and what part I continually act with him in order to win his heart. I succeed in this affair to admiration, and find that to be in the good graces of men, there's not a better way than to dress yourself out to their view, in their own inclinations, and to give into their maxims, to praise their foibles, and applaud every thing they do. There is not the least fear of overcharging our complaisance; no matter whether the manner in which we play upon them be visible, your sliest people are always good dupes on the side of flattery; and there is nothing so impertinent, and so ridiculous, which we may not bring them to swallow, when we season it with praise: sincerity suffers a little by the trade I follow. But when we have need of men, we may reasonably be allowed to suit ourselves to their taste; and since we have no other way, but this, to compass them, it is not the fault of those who flatter, but of those who will be flattered.

Eliza. But why don't you likewise endeavour to gain my brother for a support, in case the servant should take it into her head to betray our secret.

Valere. There is no managing them both at once; the temper of the father and that of the son, are things so opposite, that it is difficult to reconcile a confidence with both at the same time. But you, on your part, will please to transact the busi-

ness with your brother, and take the advantage of the friendship there is betwixt you two, to bring him over to your interests. Here he comes. I'll retire. Lay hold of the opportunity of breaking it to him; and let him no farther into our affairs than you shall think proper.

Eliza. I don't know whether I shall have the power to lay myself thus open to him.

S C E N E II.

C L E A N T H E S, E L I Z A.

C L E A N T H E S.

I AM very glad to find you alone, sister; and I was impatient to speak with you, to impart a certain secret to you.

Eliza. Here I am, brother, ready to hearken to you. What is it you have to say to me?

Cleanthes. Several things, sister, comprehended in one word.—I am in love.

Eliza. In love?

Cleanthes. Yes, in love: but, before I go any farther, I know that I depend on a father, and that the name of son subjects me to his pleasure; that we ought not to engage ourselves, without their consent who gave us birth; that heaven has made them masters of our vows; and that we are enjoined not to dispose of ourselves, but by their direction: that they, not being under the prejudice of a foolish passion, are in a condition of being imposed upon, much less than we; and of seeing better what is proper for us; that we ought rather to trust to the eyes of their prudence, than to the blindness of our passion; and that the heat of youth frequent-

ly draws us upon dangerous precipices. I say all this to you, sister, that you should not give yourself the trouble of saying it to me; for in short, my love will allow me to hear nothing that can be said; and I beg of you not to make me any remonstrances.

Eliza. Have you engaged yourself, brother, with her you love?

Cleanthes. No, but I have resolved to do it; and I conjure you once more to bring me no reasons to dissuade me from it.

Eliza. Am I, brother, so strange a person?

Cleanthes. No, sister, but you are not in love; you are ignorant of that sweet violence which the tender passion commits upon our hearts, and I fear your wisdom.

Eliza. Alas! brother, no more of that. There are no persons but are deficient that way, at least, once in their lives; and if I lay open my heart to you, I shall perhaps appear much less discreet in your eyes than yourself.

Cleanthes. Ah! would heaven your heart, like mine——

Eliza. Let us finish your affair first of all; and tell me who is the person you are in love with.

Cleanthes. A young creature who has lately lived in this neighbourhood, and who seems to be made to inspire all that behold her with love; nature, my dear sister, has formed nothing more amiable; I was in transports from the moment I saw her. She is called Mariana, and she lives under the direction of a good woman her mother, who is almost always sick, and for whom this dear girl entertains sentiments of friendship not to be imagined. She attends her, bemoans her, comforts her with a tenderness that would touch you to the

very soul. She goes about every thing she does with a most delightful air; and there a thousand graces shine in all her actions; a sweetness most winning, a good nature all engaging, a modesty adorable, a——Ah! sister, I wish you had but seen her.

Eliza. I see a great deal of her, dear brother, in what you've told me; and to comprehend what she is, it is sufficient for me that you love her.

Cleanthes. I have learn'd underhand, that they are not in extraordinary circumstances, and that their frugal management has much ado to spin out the small matter they are possessed of, so as to answer all their necessities. Imagine with yourself, sister, what joy it must be to raise the fortune of a person one loves; to contribute in a handsome manner, some small relief to the modest necessities of a virtuous family: and think with yourself what grief it must be to me, to see that, by the avarice of a father, I am under an impossibility of tasting this pleasure, and of discovering to this fair one any testimony of my love.

Eliza. Yes, brother, I sufficiently conceive how much you must be concerned.

Cleanthes. Ah! sister, it is greater than one can imagine: for in short, can any thing be more cruel, than that rigorous usage with which we are kept under; that strange barrenness in which we're made to starve? And what good will it do to us to have means, if they don't fall to us but at a time when we are past the prime of enjoying them; and if I am forc'd, even for my necessary support, to run myself in debt with every body about me; if you and I are reduc'd to hunt about daily for relief from tradesmen, to be in a capacity

of clothing ourselves with common decency? In short, I wanted to speak with you, to assist me in founding my father upon my present sentiments; and if I find he opposes them, I am resolved to go elsewhere with this lovely creature, and make the best of that fortune which providence shall throw in our way. I'm ransacking high and low to borrow money with this design; and if your affairs, sister, resemble mine, and it must be so that our father opposes our inclinations, we will even both leave him, and free ourselves from that tyranny in which we have been so long confined by his avarice.

Eliza. It is very true, he gives us every day more and more reason to regret the loss of our mother, and that—

Cleanthes. I hear him coming: let us step at a distance a little, that we may thoroughly unbosom ourselves; and afterwards we'll join our forces, to make our attack on the ruggedness of his temper.

S C E N E III.

H A R P A G O N, L A F L E C H E.

H A R P A G O N.

BE GONE immediately, and let me have no more prating. March then out of my house, thou finish'd, sworn rascal, thou true gallows-swing'r.

La Fleche aside.] Never did I see any thing so villainous as this cursed old fellow; I'm of opinion he's posses'd.

Harpagon. Do'st mutter between thy teeth?

La Fleche. Why do you drive me out thus?

Harpagon. It well becomes thee, villain, to ask me reasons, indeed! get out, quickly, that I may not beat out thy brains.

La Fleche. What have I done to you?

Harpagon. Done this, made me resolve thou shalt be gone.

La Fleche. My master, your son, has commanded me to wait for him.

Harpagon. Go, and wait for him in the street, and not in my house, planted bolt upright like a stake, to observe what passes, and make thy ends of every thing. I won't have eternally before my eyes a spy upon all my affairs, a traitor, whose cursed eyes besiege all my actions, devour what I have, and search every corner to see whether there's any thing to pilfer.

La Fleche. How the deuce can any one contrive to steal from you? Are you a man to be robb'd, who keep every thing under lock and key, and stand sentinel day and night?

Harpagon. I will lock every thing I chuse, and stand sentinel as I please. Are not these a pretty parcel of spies upon me, who make observations upon every thing one does? [Aside.] I tremble for fear he has suspected something about my money. Don't you, fellow, raise stories about that I have money concealed in my house?

La Fleche. Have you money concealed?

Harpagon. No rascal, I don't say so. I shall run mad. I only ask whether thou wilt not maliciously raise a report that I have?

La Fleche. What matters it to us that you have, or that you have not, since 'tis just the same thing to us?

Harpagon. Ho! you turn reasoner, do you? I'll

give you a reason in at your ears. [Lifting up his hand to give La Fleche a box on the ear.] Begone, once more.

La Fleche. Well, I'm a going.

Harpagon. Stay, hast thou carry'd nothing away from me?

La Fleche. What should I carry away from you?

Harpagon. Come hither that I may see; shew me thy hands.

La Fleche. There.

Harpagon. T'other.

La Fleche. T'other?

Harpagon. Yes.

La Fleche. There.

Harpagon. Hast thou cramm'd nothing in here?

[Pointing to La Fleche's breeches.]

La Fleche. Look yourself.

Harpagon, feeling the knees of his breeches.] These wide-knee'd breeches are proper receivers of stolen goods; and I wish he had been hang'd who—

La Fleche aside.] Ah! how richly does such a fellow as this deserve what he fears! and how delighted would I be to rob him?

Harpagon. Heh!

La Fleche. What?

Harpagon. What is it you talk of robbing?

La Fleche. I say that you feel pretty well round about, to see if I have robbed you.

Harpagon. That's what I would do.

[Feels in La Fleche's pockets.]

La Fleche aside.] Deuce take all stinginess, and stingy curs.

Harpagon. How? what d'ye say?

La Fleche. What do I say!

Harpagon. Yes. What d'ye say of stinginess, and stingy curs?

La Fleche. I say, deuce take all stinginess, and stingy curs.

Harpagon. Of whom d'ye speak?

La Fleche. Of the stingy.

Harpagon. And who are those stingy?

La Fleche. Villains, curmudgeons.

Harpagon. But who do you mean by that?

La Fleche. What is it you are uneasy about?

Harpagon. I am uneasy about what I ought to be.

La Fleche. Is it that you believe I intend to speak of you?

Harpagon. I believe what I believe; but I have a mind you shall tell me whom you speak to, when you say that.

La Fleche. I speak—I speak—to my cap.

Harpagon. And I could find in my heart to speak to thy crown.

La Fleche. Will you hinder me from cursing the covetous?

Harpagon. No; but I'll hinder thee from prating and being insolent. Hold thy tongue.

La Fleche. I name nobody.

Harpagon. I'll break thy bones if thou sayest a word more.

La Fleche. If the cap fits any body, let him take it.

Harpagon. Not done yet?

La Fleche. Yes, much against my will.

Harpagon. Ha! hah!

La Fleche, shewing him one of his waste-coat pockets.] Stay; here is one pocket more; are you satisfy'd?

Harpagon. Come, give it me, without the trouble of rummaging for it.

La Fleche. What?

Harpagon. What thou hast took from me.

La Fleche. I've taken nothing at all from you.

Harpagon. Really?

La Fleche. Really.

Harpagon. Get you hence then, and the d—l go with thee.

La Fleche aside.] So; I am blessedly dismissed.

Harpagon. I charge it home upon thy conscience, however.

S C E N E IV.

H A R P A G O N alone.

THERE is a hang-dog of a valet, who is a constant vexation to me: I don't like to see such a good-for-nothing cur about me. In troth 'tis no small plague to keep a great sum of money by one; and happy is he who has all his cash at good interest, and reserves no more in his own hands than needs must for common expences: one's not a little puzzled to find, in the whole house, a trusty hoarding-place; for your strong boxes are, to me, very suspicious places, and I would never trust them. I look upon them to be mere bait for thieves, who commonly lay hands upon them before any thing else.

SCENE V.

HARPAGON, ELIZA and CLEANTHES
talking together at the farther part of the stage.

HARPAGON thinking himself alone.

NEvertheless, I'm not sure whether I've done right in burying the ten thousand crowns in my garden, which were paid me in yesterday.— Ten thousand crowns in gold is a sum sufficiently— [Seeing the brother and sister whispering together.] O heavens! I have betray'd myself; my warmth transported me; I believe I spoke aloud when I was talking to myself. [To Cleanthes and Eliza.] What's the matter?

Cleanthes. Nothing, father.

Harpagon. Have you been long there?

Eliza. We were but just come hither.

Harpagon. Did you overhear—

Cleanthes. What, father?

Harpagon. What I—

Eliza. What might it be?

Harpagon. What I was just now a saying.

Cleanthes. No.

Harpagon. You did, you did.

Eliza. With submision, we did not.

Harpagon. I plainly see you heard some few words. I was discoursing to myself about the difficulty, now-a-days, of coming at money, and I was saying that happy is he who hath ten thousand crowns in his house.

Cleanthes. We were afraid of coming up to you, for fear we should disturb you.

Harpagon. I am very glad to acquaint you with

what I said, that you might not take things the wrong way, and imagine with yourselves I said it was I, who had ten thousand crowns.

Cleanthes. We don't pry into your affairs.

Harpagon. Would I had them, those ten thousand crowns.

Cleanthes. I don't believe—

Harpagon. It would be a fine thing for me.

Eliza. These are things—

Harpagon. I should find an use for them.

Cleanthes. I'm opinion that—

Harpagon. It would be of great service to me.

Eliza. You are—

Harpagon. And I should make no complaints, as I do now, that the times are hard.

Cleanthes. Bless me! father, you have no reason to complain: every one knows you have wealth sufficient.

Harpagon. How! I wealth sufficient? They that say it are liars: there is nothing more false, and they are rascals who raise such reports.

Eliza. Don't put yourself in a passion.

Harpagon. 'Tis strange that my own children should betray me, and turn my enemies!

Cleanthes. Is it being your enemy, to tell you that you have wealth?

Harpagon. Yes: such kind of talk, and the expences you are at, will be the occasion, one of these days, of peoples coming to cut my throat, under the imagination that I am made up of nothing else but gold and silver.

Cleanthes. What great expences am I at?

Harpagon. What? is there any thing more scandalous than that magnificent equipage with which you jant it about town? I was scolding your sister

yesterday, but this is still ten times worse. It perfectly cries to heaven for vengeance; and were one to take you from head to foot, one might find enough to purchase an handsome annuity for life. I have told you twenty times, Cleanthes, that all your ways very much displease me: you give furiously into the marquis; and you must certainly rob me, to go drest as you do.

Cleanthes. How, rob you?

Harpagon. How should I know? Where can you get wherewithal to support the grandeur you live in?

Cleanthes. I, father? 'tis by play: and as I am very lucky, I lay out all the money I win upon my pack.

Harpagon. 'Tis very ill done. If you have luck at play, you should make good use of it, and put out the money you win to honest interest, that you might find it another time. I should be glad to know, without mentioning the rest, to what end serve all these ribbons, with which you are so finely larded from head to foot; and whether half a dozen hooks and eyes would not be enough to fasten your breeches knees? What occasion is there to lay out money for perukes, when one may wear hair of one's own growth, that costs nothing? I'll bold a wager that what in perukes, and what in ribbons, there go at least twenty guineas: and twenty guineas bring in, at least, one pound thirteen shillings and eleven pence farthing per annum, at only eight per cent. interest.

Cleanthes. Very true.

Harpagon. No more of this, let's talk of other business. [Aside, observing Cleanthes and Eliza making signs to one another.] Mercy on me! I

believe they are making signs to one another, to pick my pocket. [Aloud.] What mean those gestures?

Eliza. We are bargaining, my brother and I, who shall speak first; and we have each of us something to say to you.

Harpagon. And I also have something to say to each of you.

Cleanthes. 'Tis about marriage, father, that we have a desire to talk with you.

Harpagon. 'Tis about marriage that I want to discourse with you.

Eliza. Ah! father.

Harpagon. Why that ah? is it the word, daughter, or the thing that frights you?

Cleanthes. Matrimony may be frightful in both respects, in the manner you may design it; and we are afraid our sentiments may not happen to be agreeable to your choice.

Harpagon. A little patience. Don't fright yourselves: I know what is proper for you both; and you shall have no reason either of you, to complain of any thing I intend to do. [To Cleanthes.] And to begin at the right end: have you seen, pray tell me, a young person who is called Maria, and who lodges not far from this place?

Cleanthes. Yes, father.

Harpagon. And you, child?

Eliza. I've heard her spoken of.

Harpagon. How do you like this girl, son?

Cleanthes. She is a charming young creature.

Harpagon. Her looks?

Cleanthes. Ingenuous and sprightly.

Harpagon. Her air and manner?

Cleanthes. Admirable, undoubtedly.

Harpagon. Don't you think that such a girl as this sufficiently deserves to be taken notice of?

Cleanthes. Yes, father.

Harpagon. That this would be a desirable match?

Cleanthes. Most desirable.

Harpagon. That she has all the appearance of making an excellent housewife?

Cleanthes. Without dispute.

Harpagon. And that a husband might live comfortably with her?

Cleanthes. Certainly.

Harpagon. There is a trifling difficulty in it: I am afraid she has not so much money, as one might reasonably pretend to.

Cleanthes. Oh! Sir, money is no great matter, when the question is about marrying a virtuous person.

Harpagon. Pardon me, pardon me. But there is this to be said for it, that if one does not find the riches answer one's wish, one may endeavour to make it up in something else.

Cleanthes. That is to be supposed.

Harpagon. In short, I'm very glad to find you agree with my sentiments: for her honest deportment, and sweetnes of temper have gain'd my heart; and I'm resolv'd to marry her, provided I find she has something of a portion.

Cleanthes. O heavens!

Harpagon. What now?

Cleanthes. You are resolv'd you say—

Harpagon. To marry Mariana.

Cleanthes. Who, you? you?

Harpagon. Yes, I, I, I. What can be the meaning of all this?

Cleanthes. A dizziness has suddenly seized me, and I'll withdraw a little.

Harpagon. 'Twill be soon over. Go quickly into the kitchen, and drink a large glass of clear water.

S C E N E VI.

H A R P A G O N, E L I Z A.

H A R P A G O N.

THESE are your slimy beaux, who have no more heart than chickens. This, daughter, is what I have resolved with regard to myself. As to your brother, I have pitch'd upon a certain widow for him, who was spoke of to me this morning; and for thee, I'll give thee to Signior Anselm.

Eliza. To Signior Anselm?

Harpagon. Yes. A stay'd, prudent, and wise man, who is not above fifty years old, and is reported to be very rich.

Eliza curt'sying.] I have no inclination to marry, father, if you please.

Harpagon curt'sying again.] And I've an inclination, that my little girl, my precious, should marry, if it pleases.

Eliza curt'sying again.] I beg your pardon, father.

Harpagon curt'sying again.] I beg your pardon, daughter.

Eliza. I am Signior Anselm's most humble servant. [Curt'sying again.] But, with your leave, I will not marry him.

Harpagon. I am your most humble slave. [Curt-

fyng again.] But with your leave, you shall marry him this very night.

Eliza. This very night?

Harpagon. This very night.

Eliza curt'fyng again.] This can't be, father.

Harpagon curt'fyng again.] This must be, daughter.

Eliza. No.

Harpagon. Yes.

Eliza. No, I tell you.

Harpagon. Yes, I tell you.

Eliza. 'Tis a thing you shall never force me to do.

Harpagon. 'Tis a thing I will force you to do.

Eliza. I'll sooner kill myself than marry such a husband.

Harpagon. You shall not kill yourself, and you shall marry him. But see what assurance is here! Did ever any body see a daughter speak after this manner to a father?

Eliza. But did ever any body see a father marry his daughter in this manner?

Harpagon. 'Tis a match to which there can be no objection; and I hold a wager every body will approve my choice.

Eliza. And I'll lay that it can't be approv'd by any reasonable person.

Harpagon. Here comes Valere: have you a mind that we shall make him a judge between us in this affait?

Eliza. With all my heart.

Harpagon. But will you be determin'd by his judgment.

Eliza. Yes. I'll stand by whatever he says.

Harpagon. 'Tis done.

SCENE VII.

VALERE, HARPAGON, ELIZA.

HARPAGON.

COME hither, Valere, we have pitch'd upon you to judge who is in the right, my daughter, or I.

Valere. 'Tis you, Sir, beyond all dispute.

Harpagon. Do you know what we are talking about?

Valere. No. But you can't be in the wrong, you are all reason.

Harpagon. I have a mind, this evening, to give her a man for a husband who is equally rich and wise; and the baggage tells me to my face, that she scorns to take him. What do you say to that?

Valere. What do I say to it?

Harpagon. Yes.

Valere. I, I—

Harpagon. What?

Valere. I say, that in the main, I am of your opinion, and you can't possibly fail of being in the right. But at the same time she is not wholly in the wrong; and—

Harpagon. How so? Signior Anselm is a considerable match; he's a person of quality, sweet-temper'd, stay'd, discreet, and very rich, and who has no child left by his former marriage. Could she be better fitted?

Valere. That's true. But then she might tell you, that this is rather hurrying matters too much; and that some time, at least, should have been given to try whether her inclination might reconcile itself with—

Harpagon. 'Tis an opportunity which we must catch quickly by the forelock. I find an advantage here, which I should not find elsewhere; and he engages himself to take her without a portion.

Valere. Without a portion?

Harpagon. Yes.

Valere. Oh! I say not a word more. You see here is a reason absolutely convincing; you must yield to this.

Harpagon. This is a great saving to me.

Valere. Most certainly, this admits of no contradiction: 'Tis true, your daughter may represent to you, that marriage is a more important affair than people are apt to conceive; that 'tis a commencing happy or unhappy for life; and that an engagement which is to last till death, should never be made without great precaution.

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. You say right. That's what decides all, that's taken for granted. There are people might tell you, that, on such occasions, the inclination of a daughter is, without doubt, a thing which ought to be regarded; and that this great disparity of age, of humour, and of sentiments, makes a marriage subject to most vexatious accidents.

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. Oh! there's no reply to that. We very well know it. Who the deuce can stand against it? Not but that there are many fathers who would like much better to husband well the satisfaction of their children, than the money they might give with them; who would never sacrifice them to interest, and would study above all things, to mix in a match that sweet conformity, which continually

maintains the honour, tranquillity, and joy of it ; and that----

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. 'Tis true. That stops every mouth ; "Without a portion :" shew me a way to withstand such an argument as that ?

Harpagon aside, looking towards the garden.] Bless me, I think I hear a dog barking ; is it not somebody who has a design upon my money ? [To Valere.] Do not stir, I'll return immediately.

S C E N E VIII.

E L I Z A, V A L E R E.

E L I Z A.

ARE you in jest, Valere, to talk to him as you do ?

Valere. 'Tis that I may not exasperate him, and may compass my end the better. Directly to fall foul on his sentiments is the way to spoil all. There are some people must be taken only the round-about way ; tempers averse to all resistance ; who always bear obstinately against the right road of reason, whom you can never bring where you would have them, but by winding them about. Seem to consent to what he has a mind to, you'll gain your point the better ; and---

Eliza. But this marriage, Valere ?

Valere. We'll contrive some means to break it off.

Eliza. But what invention to find, if it must be concluded this evening ?

Valere. You must desire it may be delay'd, and feign some disorder.

Eliza. But they'll discover the counterfeit, if they call in the physicians.

Valere. You jest sure? Do they know any thing of the matter? Pooh! pooh! You may have what distemper you please for all them; they'll find you reasons to account for the cause of it.

S C E N E IX.

HARPAGON, ELIZA, VALERE.

HARPAGON aside, at the further part of the stage.

THANK heaven 'tis nothing.

T Valere not seeing Harpagon.] In short, our last resort is, that flight will screen us from every thing; and if your love, fair Eliza, is capable of firmness——[Observing Harpagon.] Yes, it is fitting that a daughter should be obedient to a father; she ought by no means to mind the make of a husband; and when the substantial argument of “without a portion” offers itself, she ought to be ready to take any thing one will give her.

Harpagon. Good. That was admirably said.

Valere. Sir, I ask pardon, if I am a little warm, and take the liberty to talk to her in the manner I do.

Harpagon. How! I am charmed with it, and it is my pleasure that you take her wholly under your power. [To Eliza.] Nay, it signifies nothing to run away. I give him the same authority over you that heaven has given me, and will have you comply with every thing he chuses——

Valere to Eliza.] After this, resist my remonstrances.

SCENE X.

HARPAGON, VALERE.

VALERE.

I'LL follow her, Sir, and give her more of the same lectures.

Harpagon. Do so. You'll oblige me. Verily—

Valere. It is good to keep a strict hand over her.

Harpagon. That is true. We must—

Valere. Don't trouble yourself in the least, I think I shall bring it to bear.

Harpagon. Do, do. I am going to take a short turn in the city, and shall be back again presently.

Valere going towards that side of the stage where

Eliza went off, and speaking as to her.]

Yes: money is the most valuable thing in this world; and you ought to thank heaven for the worthy man of a father it has bestowed on you. He knows what it is to live. When a person offers to take off a daughter without a portion, one ought to look no further. Every thing is included in that. And, “without a portion,” supplies the place of beauty, youth, pedigree, honour, wisdom, and probity.

Harpagon alone.] Ah! brave boy! This is speaking like an orator:—happy the man who has such a servant as this!

ACT II. SCENE I.

CLEANTHES, LA FLECHE.

CLEANTHES.

HEY! Mr. Rascal as you are! Where have you been thrusting in your impudent nose? Did not I command you to——

La Fleche. Yes, Sir, and I came here to attend you; but your father, a most ungracious mortal, drove me out in spite of my teeth, and I ran the risque of being cudgelled.

Cleanthes. How goes our affair? Things are more urgent than ever; and since I left you, I have discovered that I have got a rival, and who should it be but my father.

La Fleche. Your father in love?

Cleanthes. Yes; and I had all the difficulty in the world to conceal from him the disorder which this news threw me into.

La Fleche. He dabble in love-affairs! What the deuce does he think of! has he a mind to put a joke upon the world? and was love, designed for such people as him?

Cleanthes. It must needs happen for my sins, that this passion should have got into his head.

La Fleche. But for what reason do you make a mystery to him of your being in love?

Cleanthes. To give him less suspicion, and reserve myself, in case of need, the easiest means of breaking off the match.——What answer have they made you.

La Fleche. Why, Sir, those that borrow are in a scurvy way; one must bear with strange things when one's under necessity, as you are, of passing through the hands of a money-scrivener.

Cleanthes. Won't the job be done at all then?

La Fleche. Pardon me. Our Mr. Simon the broker, who is recommended to us as an active, stirring fellow, tells me he has left no stone unturned to serve you, and protests that your looks alone have gained his heart.

Cleanthes. Am I to have the fifteen thousand livres then, that I ask?

La Fleche. Yes; but upon some trifling conditions, which it is necessary you should accept, if you design matters should do.

Cleanthes. Did he bring you to the speech of him who was to lend the money?

La Fleche. No truly, this business is not transacted after that fashion. He takes even more pains to be hid than you do, and here are mysteries much greater than you imagine. He would by no means tell me his name: and he is to be brought to an interview with you to-day at a strange house, to be informed from your own mouth, of your substance and your family; and I make no manner of doubt, but the name only of your father will make things very easy.

Cleanthes. And chiefly my mother's being dead, whose jointure nobody can hinder me of.

La Fleche. Here are some articles which he himself dictated to our broker, to be shewn you before any thing can be done.

“ On supposition that the lender sees all his securities good, and the borrower be of age, of a family whose estate is great, solid, and secure,

“ clear and free from all incumbrances, a good,
“ punctual bond shall be executed before a notary,
“ the honestest man can possibly be had, and who,
“ for that purpose, must be chose by the lender, to
“ whom it is of the greatest importance that the in-
“ strument be rightly drawn up.

Cleanthes. There is nothing to be said against this.

La Fleche. “ The lender, not to load his con-
“ science with the least scruple, does not pretend
“ to place out his money at more than eighteen
“ per cent.

Cleanthes. At eighteen per cent.! That's an honest fellow! We have no room to complain of this.

La Fleche. That is true.

“ But as the lender aforesaid has not by him the sum under debate, and that to do the borrower a favour, he himself is obliged to borrow of another, on the foot of five per cent, it will be but reasonable that the said first borrower pay that interest, without prejudice to the other, as considering it is only to oblige him that the said lender engages himself to borrow this.

Cleanthes. The devil! What a Jew! What a Turk is here! It is above twenty per cent.

La Fleche. Very true; that is what I said; you had best consider on it.

Cleanthes. What wouldst thou have me consider? I want money, and I must agree to it all.

La Fleche. So I told him.

Cleanthes. Is there any thing more?

La Fleche. One small article only.

“ Of the fifteen thousand livres required, the lender will not be able to pay in cash more than

“ twelve thousand; and as to the three thousand
“ crowns remaining, the borrower must take them
“ out in household-stuff, furniture, and trinkets;
“ of which follows the inventory, and which the
“ said lender has honestly put at the most moderate
“ price he possibly could.

Cleanthes. What's the meaning of all this?

La Fleche. Hear the inventory.

Imprimis, “ One standing-bed, with point lace,
“ handsomely sow'd upon an olive colour'd cloth;
“ with six chairs, and a counterpane of the same,
“ all in good condition, and lined with red and
“ blue taffety.

Item, “ One tent-bed of a good dry rose-colour-
“ ed serge, with the fringes of silk.

Cleanthes. What would he have me do with
this?

La Fleche. Hold.

Item, “ One suit of tapestry hangings, being the
“ amours of Gombaut and Macaea.

Item, “ One large walnut-tree-table, with twelve
“ columns, or turn'd pillars, drawing out at each
“ end, and fitted up with its half dozen joint stools
“ under it.

Cleanthes. 'Sdeath, what have I to do—

La Fleche. Have patience.

Item, “ Three large musquets inlaid with mo-
ther of pearl, the rests suited to them.

Item, “ One brick furnace, with two retorts,
“ and three recevoirs, very useful for those who are
“ curious in distillations.

Cleanthes. I shall go mad.

La Fleche. Softly.

Item, “ One Bologna lute, with its complement
“ of strings, or but few wanting.

Item, "One fox and goose table, one chess board; " with the play of the Goose, restored from the "Greeks, very proper to pass away the time, when "one has nothing to do.

Item, "One lizard skin, three feet and a half, "stuffed with hay; a pretty curiosity to hang up "at the cieling of a chamber.

"The total above-mentioned being honestly "worth four thousand five hundred livres, is re- "duced to the value of a thousand crowns by the "moderation of the lender."

Cleanthes. The deuce take the villain and his moderation both! Was there ever such extortion heard of! And he is not satisfied with the cruel interest he demands, but he must still force me to take the beggarly old lumber he has heaped together, at the rate of three thousand livres? I shan't make two hundred crowns of the whole; and yet for all this, I must even resolve to agree to his terms; for he is in a condition to make me accept any thing; the villain has me at his mercy.

La Fleche. Sir, without offence, you are exactly in the high road which Panurge took to be ruined; getting money advanced, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating your corn in the blade.

Cleanthes. What wouldest thou have me to do? See what young fellows are reduced to by the miserable avarice of fathers! Can one be astonished, after this, that their children wish them dead?

La Fleche. I must confess that yours would incense the most peaceable man in the world against his villainy: I have not, heaven be praised, inclinations strongly bent towards hanging; and amongst my comrades, whom I see dabbling pretty much in the small-craft way, I have dexterity to draw my

neck out of the halter, and disentangle myself from all gallantries which taste ever so little of the gallows; but, to say the truth, he would even tempt me by his proceedings to rob him; and I should think, in robbing him, I did a meritorious action.

Cleanthes. Give me that inventory that I may look it over again.

S C E N E II.

HARPAGON, MR. SIMON, CLEANTHES,
LA FLECHE at the farther part of the stage.

MR. SIMON.

YES, Sir, it is a young man in want of money: his affairs force him to take it up, and he'll stick at nothing you prescribe him.

Harpagon. But do you believe, Mr. Simon, there is no hazard run in this case? And do you know his name, estate and family?

Mr. Simon. No, I can't well let you thoroughly into that; and it was only by chance I was directed to him; but you will be made acquainted with every thing by himself; and his man assured me that you would be satisfied when you came to know him. All I can tell you, is, that his family is rich, that he has no mother, and that he will give bond, if you insist upon it, that his father shall die before the end of eight months.

Harpagon. That is something, indeed. Charity, Mr. Simon, obliges us to gratify people when it is in our power.

Mr. Simon. That's to be supposed.

La Fleche low to Cleanthes, perceiving Mr. Si-

mon.] What is the meaning of this? Mr. Simon in discourse with your father?

Cleanthes low to La Fleche.] Can they have informed him who I am? and dost thou betray me?

Mr. Simon to La Fleche.] Hah! you are in mighty haste! Who told you this was the house? [To Harpagon.] It was none of me, Sir, however, who discovered to them your name and your lodging; but in my opinion there is no great harm in it; they are discreet people, and here you may explain to one another.

Harpagon. How!

Mr. Simon pointing to Cleanthes.] This is the gentleman who would borrow the fifteen thousand livres of you, that I was speaking of.

Harpagon. How, sirrah, is it you that abandon yourself to these culpable extremities?

Cleanthes. How, father, is it you that descend to these base actions?

[Mr. Simon makes off, and La Fleche goes to hide himself.

S C E N E III.

H A R P A G O N, C L E A N T H E S.

H A R P A G O N.

W HAT, is it you who would ruin yourself by such rascally borrowings?

Cleanthes. Is it you who seek to enrich yourself by such villainous usury.

Harpagon. Dar'st thou, after this, appear before me?

Cleanthes. Dare you, after this, shew yourself to the world?

Harpagon. Are you not ashamed, pray, to descend to these debaucheries? to run headlong into horrible expences, and scandalously squander that substance, which your ancestors have amassed for you with the sweat of their brows?

Cleanthes. Don't you blush to disgrace your rank by the trade you drive? to sacrifice honour and reputation to the infatiable desire of amassing great riches, and to outdo, in point of interest, the most infamous subtilties that ever were invented by the most notorious usurers?

Harpagon. Begone out of my sight, rascal, begone out of my sight.

Cleanthes. Who think you is the greater criminal, he who hires the money he really wants, or he, forsooth, who pilfers the money he has no manner of use for?

Harpagon. Hence, I say, and don't torment my ears—[Exit Cleanthes.] I'm not in the least sorry for this adventure, it will be a warning to me, to keep a stricter eye than ever upon all his actions.

S C E N E IV.

F R O S I N A, H A R P A G O N.

SIR—

F R O S I N A.

Harpagon. Stay a little, I'll come back and talk with you presently—[Aside.] It is proper I should make a short trip to my money.

SCENE V.

LA FLECHE, HARPAGON.

LA FLECHE, not observing Frosina.

THE adventure is droll to the last degree. He must certainly have an immense magazine of goods, in one place or other; for there is not one thing in the inventory ever came to our knowledge:

Frosina. [Seeing him.] Ha! is it you, my poor La Fleche! how happens this meeting?

La Fleche. Hah! hah! is it you, Frosina! what have you to do here?

Frosina. What I do every where else; to play the Go-between in affairs, make myself serviceable to people, and make the best advantage I possibly can of the small talents I am possessed of. You know that in this world we must live by address, and that to such as I am, heaven has given no other income but intrigue.

La Fleche. Have you any business with the master of this house?

Frosina. Yes, I'm transacting a small affair for him, for which I expect a reward.

La Fleche. From him? Ay, faith, you'll be very subtle if you extract any thing from thence; and I must tell you that money is very scarce in this house.

Frosina. There are certain services which are wonderfully engaging.

La Fleche. I'm your most obedient; and you don't as yet know Signior Harpagon. Signior Harpagon is a human creature, of all human creatures

the least humane; a mortal of all mortals the hardest, and most close-fisted. There is no service can push his gratitude to the extremity of unclenching his hands. Of praise, esteem, kindness in words, and friendship as much as you please; but of money, not a farthing. There is nothing more dry and withered than his favours and carestes, and Give is a word for which he has so great an abhorrence, that he never says, I give you a good-morrow, but I lend you a good-morrow.

Frosina. I'gad I've the art of winning men. I've the secret of introducing myself into their affections; of tickling their hearts, to find on which side they are the most sensible.

La Fleche. All stuff here! I defy you to melt the man we are speaking of, on the side of money. He is a Turk on that head, but of a disposition so Turkish, as to make all the world despair; ye may burst him before ye can move him; in short, he loves money more than reputation, honour, and virtue, and the sight of a person who has any demand upon him, throws him into convulsions; this wounds him in the mortal part, pierces him to the heart, tears out his very entrails; and if----but he returns; I must retire. [Exit La Fleche.

S C E N E VI.

H A R P A G O N, F R O S I N A.

HARPAGON aside.

EVERY thing is as it should be----[Aloud.] Well, what do you want, Frosina?

Frosina. Blefs me! what a constitution is there! why you are the very picture of health.

Harpagon. Who, I?

Frosina. Never did I see you look so fresh and jolly.

Harpagon. Indeed?

Frosina. Why you were never so young in your life as you are now: I see fellows of five and twenty, who are older than you.

Harpagon. For all that, Frosina, I am some three-score years well told.

Frosina. Well, what's that? threescore! here's a pother indeed! 'Tis the very flower of one's age, and you are now entering upon the prime season of man.

Harpagon. 'Tis true; but twenty years less, though, would do me no harm, I believe.

Frosina. You joke sure. You've no need o't, your temper'd to last a hundred years.

Harpagon. Do you think so?

Frosina. Most certainly; you have all the marks of it. Stay a little. Ha! There is a token for you of long life, just between your two eyes.

Harpagon. Have you any skill in these matters?

Frosina. Certainly. Shew me your hand. Mercy o' me! what a line of life's there!

Harpagon. What mean ye?

Frosina. Don't you see what a vast way that line goes.

Harpagon. Well; what does that signify?

Frosina. O' my conscience, I said a hundred years, but you'll weather above six score.

Harpagon. Is it possible?

Frosina. You must be knocked on the head, I tell you; you'll live to bury your children, and your children's children.

Harpagon. So much the better. How goes our affair?

Frosina. Need you ask? Does any body see me meddle with a thing I don't bring to bear? I've above all, a wondrous talent at match-making. There an't two people in the world that I can't find ways and means to couple in a trice; and I believe if I once took it into me head, I could marry the Great Turk with the republic of Venice—but there was not, to be sure, such great difficulty in this affair. As I'm very intimate with them, I've had deep discourse with them both about you: I told the mother the design you had upon Mariana, having seen her pass along the street, and taking the air at her window.

Harpagon. Who made answer—

Frosina. She joyfully received the proposal, when I assur'd her, that you were very desirous her daughter should assist this evening at the marriage contract, which is to be sign'd in relation to yours; she readily consented to it, and for this purpose has trusted her to my care.

Harpagon. The thing is, Frosina, that I'm obliged to give Signior Anselm a supper; and I should be glad she'd partake of the treat.

Frosina. You're in the right on't. After dinner she'll pay your daughter a visit, from whence she intends to take a turn to the fair, and so return to supper.

Harpagon. Very well, they shall go together in my coach, which I'll lend them.

Frosina. That will suit her exactly.

Harpagon. But, Frosina, hast thou talk'd to the mother about the portion she can give her daughter? have you told her she must give some assist-

ance herself, that she must strive a little, and bleed upon such an occasion as this? For I tell you again, nobody marries a girl except she brings something with her.

Harpagon. How something? She's one will bring you in a clear thousand pounds per annum.

Harpagon. A thousand pounds per annum?

Frosina. Yes. Imprimis, She has been nursed, and brought up in great scantiness of feeding. She's a girl has been used to live upon fallad, milk, cheese, and apples; and consequently there will be no need, on her account, of a table well served up, nor your exquisite jellies, nor any other delicacies that another woman must have; and this is not such a trifling matter, but it will amount to two hundred pounds per annum, at least. Item, She has no curiosity for any thing beyond decency with great plainness, and loves none of your magnificent dresses, nor rich jewels, nor magnificent furniture, which such persons as she run into with so great eagerness; and this article is worth more than three hundred pounds a year. Item, She has a horrible aversion to play, which is not common with the ladies now-a-days; and I know one of them in our neighbourhood who has lost two thousand pounds this year. But let's only take one fourth of that; five hundred pounds, and three hundred pounds in clothes and jewels, that make eight hundred pounds: and two hundred pounds which we reckon for eating, is not there your thousand pounds a-year hard money?

Harpagon. Yes, that's not amiss; but this computation has nothing real in it.

Frosina. Excuse me. Is it nothing real, to bring you in marriage great sobriety; the paternal estate

of a great love for simplicity of dress, and an acquir'd estate of great hatred of play?

Harpagon. 'Tis mere jest to pretend to make me up her portion out of all the expences she won't put me to; I shan't go to give an acquittance for what I've never receiv'd; I must absolutely have the feeling of something.

Frosina. Lack-a-day! You shall feel enough. I have heard them talk of a certain country where they have effects, of which you will be master.

Harpagon. I must see that. But, Frosina, there is one thing more which gives me uneasiness. The girl is young, as you may see; young people generally love none but those like themselves, and covet only such company. - I'm afraid a man of my age will not hit her taste; and that this may produce some little disorders in my family, that would not by any means be agreeable to me.

Frosina. How little do you know her! This is another particular in her which I was to acquaint you with; she has a terrible aversion to all young people, and loves none but your old gentry.

Harpagon. Does she really?

Frosina. Yes, she does. I wish you had heard her but talk upon this head. She cannot bear the sight of a young fellow at all. But she is never more delighted, she says, than when she can get sight of a fine old man with a venerable beard; the oldest have, with her, the greatest charms, and I warn you not to make yourself younger than you are; she would have a man sixty at the least; and 'tis not four months ago, that, being upon the point of marriage, she broke off the match on account of her spark's having discover'd that he was only fifty-six

years of age, and used not spectacles to sign the contract.

Harpagon. Only on that account?

Frosina. Yes. She says fifty-six years will not satisfy her; and that, of all things, she's for a nose that wears spectacles.

Harpagon. Verily, you tell me something altogether new.

Frosina. This matter is carry'd farther than one can express. One sees several pictures and prints in her chamber. But what would you imagine they are? Your Adonis's? your Cephalus's? your Paris's? and your Apollo's? No. Your handsome portraits of Saturn, of king Priam, of old Nestor; and good fire Anchises upon his son's shoulders.

Harpagon. That's excellent! This is what I should never have dream'd of; and I'm not a little pleas'd to find she's of this humour. In troth, had I been a woman, I should never have lov'd young fellows.

Frosina. I verily believe it. Pretty sort of trumpery indeed, your young fellows, to be in love with! These pretty boys with bibs, these fine sparks that are to be admir'd for their complexion! I should be very glad to know what relish there is in one of them.

Harpagon. For my part, I can't comprehend it, and I can't imagine how it is that there are women who love them so much.

Frosina. They must be stark fools. To think youth amiable! Have people common sensc that do it? Are they men, these same young beaux? And can people be ty'd to such animals as these?

Harpagon. That's what I always say, with their

effeminate voice, and their three little bits of a beard turn'd up like a cat's whiskers, their toupee wigs, their flowing breeches, and their breasts open.

Frosina. They are finely made, truly, when compar'd with a person like yourself! There's something like a man! There's what will gratify the eye! This is the make and dress to inspire love.

Harpagon. Do you think me tolerably to pass?

Frosina. Do I? You are ravishing, and your picture ought to be drawn. Turn a little, if you please; it is impossible to be better—let me see you walk. Here's a body, tall, free, and well shaped, as it ought to be, and that discovers not the least imperfection.

Harpagon. I have no great ones, thank heaven. I'm only sometimes seized with a violent cough.

Frosina. That's nothing at all: it by no means fits ill upon you, and you cough with a grace.

Harpagon. But hark'ee, has not Mariana seen me yet? Has she not minded me as I passed by?

Frosina. No, no: but we had a great deal of discourse about your person: and I was not wanting in setting forth your merit, and the advantage it would be to her to have such a one as you.

Harpagon. You did mighty well, and I thank you for it.

Frosina. But, Sir, I have a small request to make to you—I have a law-suit, that I'm in great danger of losing for want of a little money, [Harpagon looks grave.] and you could easily gain this suit, had you the least kindness for me—You can't imagine the pleasure she'll have to see you! [He resumes a gay air.] How you will please her! What an admirable cast will that antique ruff of yours have upon her fancy! But of all things she'll

be delighted with your breeches tag'd to your doublet with hooks and eyes. That makes her downright dote on you: a hook and eye-lover will be a most wonderful regale for her.

Harpagon. Truth you put me in raptures by this talk.

Frosina. Really, Sir, this law-suit is absolutely of the last consequence to me. [Harpagon looks serious again.] I'm undone if I lose it; and some small assistance would retrieve my affairs.—I would you had but seen the rapture she was in to hear me speak of you. [Harpagon looks gay again.] Joy sparkled in her eyes at the recital of your good qualities; and I threw her, in short, into the utmost impatience, to see this match concluded.

Harpagon. Thou hast done me an exceeding kind office, Frosina; and I confess I have all the obligations in the world to thee.

Frosina. I beseech you, Sir, grant me the small assistance I require of you. [Harpagon looks serious.] It will set me a-going again, and I should be eternally obliged to you for it.

Harpagon. Adieu. I'll go finish my dispatches.

Frosina. I do assure you, Sir, you can never relieve me in a greater necessity.

Harpagon. I'll give orders for my coach to be ready to carry you to the fair.

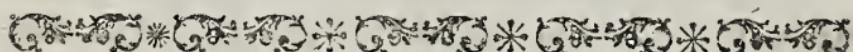
Frosina. I would not importune you thus, were I not forced to it by necessity.

Harpagon. And I'll take care you shall sup early, that you may not be sick after it.

Frosina. Don't refuse me the favour I solicit from you. You can't imagine, Sir, the pleasure that—

Harpagon. I must be gone. There they call me. Adieu.

Frosina alone.] A plague on thee, the deuce take thee for a covetous cur. The hawks was prov'd against all my attacks; but I must not quit this business however; for I've t'other side, let what will happen, whence I'm sure of getting a good reward.



A C T III. SCENE I.

M A R P A G O N, C L E A N T H E S, E L I Z A,
V A L E R E, Dame C L A U D I A, with a broom in
her hand, M r. J A M E S, B R I N D A V O I N E,
L A M E R L U C H E.

H A R P A G O N.

HERE, come hither all of you, that I may distribute to you the orders of the day, and regulate your several employments. A little nearer, Dame Claudia. To begin with you. Good, you are ready arm'd there. The care of cleaning out every thing I commit to you: and above all, take care not to rub the furniture too hard, for fear of wearing it out. I also assign to you the government of the bottles, during supper; and if one is missing, or any thing is broke, I shall look to you for it, and abate it out of your wages.

M r. James aside.] A politic punishment.

Harpagon to Dame Claudia.] Go then, and be very busy.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, ELIZA,
VALERE, MR. JAMES, BRINDAVOINE,
LA MERLUCHE.

HARPAGON.

YOU, Brindavoine, and you, Merluche, I confirm you in the charge of rinsing the glasses, and serving the wine; but only when one is thirsty, and not in the manner of some of your impertinent footmen, who must provoke people, and put it in their heads to drink, when they don't dream on't. Wait till they call for it again and again, and remember always to mix a great deal of water with it.

Mr. James aside.] Yes, for wine alone, without any mixture, gets into the head.

La Merluche. Shall we throw off our canvas rocks, Sir?

Harpagon. Yes, when you see the company coming; and take special care not to spoil your clothes.

Brindavoine. You very well know, Sir, that one of the fore-flaps of my doublet is cover'd with a great blosch of lamp-oil.

La Merluche. And I, Sir, have my breeches o' slit behind, that, saving your presence, one may see my—

Harpagon. Peace, turn that side dextrously towards the wall, and always show your fore part to the world. [Harpagon holds his hat before his doublet, to shew Brindavoine how he should hide

the blotch of oil.] And you, always hold your hat in this fashion, when you serve at table.

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, ELIZA,
VALERE, MR. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

AS for you, daughter, you'll have an eye upon what is taken away, and take care there be no manner of waste. That's very becoming young ladies. But in the mean time prepare yourself to receive my mistress handsomely, who is to pay you a visit, and attend her to the fair. Do you hear what I say to you?

Eliza. Yes, father.

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, VALERE,
MR. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

AND you, my fop of a son, whom I was so good as to forgive the late story; don't you go take it into your head, no more than she, to make four faces.

Cleanthes. I four faces, father; and for what reason?

Harpagon. Come, come, we know the skit of children, whose fathers marry again; and with what an eye they use to look upon what they call a mother-in-law. But if you wish I should lose all remembrance of your last prank, I recommend to

you, above all things, the entertaining this same person with a cheerful countenance, and to give her, in short, the handsomest reception you possibly can.

Cleanthes. To tell you the truth, father, I can by no means promise you to be well pleas'd she should become my mother-in-law. I should lie, if I told you so: but as for what concerns the receiving her handsomely, and looking upon her cheerfully, I do promise upon that head most punctually to obey you.

Harpagon. Take care of that at least.

Cleanthes. You shall see, you shan't have the least reason to complain of that.

Harpagon. You will do wisely.

S. C E N E V.

HARPAGON, VALERE, MR. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

VALERE, your assistance in this busines---
So ho! Master James, come hither, I reserv'd you for the last.

Mr. James. Is it your coachman, Sir, or your cook you would speak to? For I am both one and t'other.

Harpagon. 'Tis to both of them.

Mr. James. But to which of them first?

Harpagon. To the cook.

Mr. James. Stay then, if you please.

[Takes off his coachman's long great-coat, and appears drest as a cook.]

Harpagon. What the deuce o' ceremony's this?

Mr. James. You've nothing to do but say on.

Harpagon. I've engag'd myself, master James, to give a supper to-night.

Mr. James aside.] Most wonderful!

Harpagon. Tell me now, will you give us good cheer?

Mr. James. Yes, if you'll give me a good deal of money.

Harpagon. What a pox! always money! I think they have nothing else to say; money, money, money. Not a word else in their mouth but money. Constantly talking of money. The burden of the song is money.

Valere. I never heard an answer more impudent than that. A pretty sort of rarity, to make good cheer with a good deal of money! 'Tis the easiest thing in the world; and any poor contriver would do full as much; but to act like a man of skill, you must tell me of making good cheer with little money.

Mr. James. Good cheer with little money?

Valere. Yes.

Mr. James to Valere.] I' good troth, Mr. Steward, you'll oblige us by letting us into this secret, and taking my place of cook! You are so meddlesome here to make yourself the factotum.

Harpagon. Hold your tongue. What must we have?

Mr. James. There's Mr. Steward, Sir, will make you good cheer for little money.

Harpagon. Heh! 'Tis my pleasure that you answer me.

Mr. James. How many will there be of you at table?

Harpagon. We shall be eight or ten: but you

need only take them at eight. When there's vi^tuals enough for eight, there's enough in reason for ten.

Valere. That's to be suppos'd.

Mr. James. Well then, we must have four large soups, and five small dishes between: soups—small dishes—

Harpagon. Why, here's enough to treat a whole town from one end to th'other.

Mr. James. Roast meat-----

Harpagon clapping his hand upon his mouth.] Ha! traitor, thou art eating up all I'm worth.

Mr. James. Interm^éses-----

Harpagon. What, again?

[Clapping his hand again upon his mouth:

Valere to Mr. James.] Have you a mind to burst them all, and has my master invited people to murder them by mere force of cramming? Go, go, and read the rules of health; ask the physicians whether there is any thing so prejudicial to men, as eating to excess.

Harpagon. He's in the right.

Valere. Learn, master James, you, and such as you, that a table overcharg'd with vi^tuals is a cut-throat; that to shew yourselves true friends of those we invite, 'tis necessary frugality should reign through the whole repast; and that, according to the saying of one of the ancients, "We must eat " to live, and not live to eat."

Harpagon. Ah! 'Twas excellently said! Come, and let me hug thee for that word. It is one of the finest sentences I ever heard in my life. "We " must live to eat, and not eat to li----" No, that is not it. How was it you said?

Valere. "That we must eat to live, and not live to eat."

Harpagon to Mr. James.] Right; [to Valere.] hark'ee, who is the great man that said that?

Valere. I don't remember his name at present.

Harpagon. You must write out those words for me; I'll have them grav'd in letters of gold over my hall chimney.

Valere. I won't fail. And as to your supper, you need only leave it to me. I'll order all that matter just as it should be,

Harpagon. Do then.

Mr. James. So much the better; I shall have the less trouble about it.

Harpagon to Valere.] There must be such things as people can't eat much of, and that cloy them immediately; some good pease-porridge, pretty fat, with a pye in a pot well garnish'd with chesnuts, a-----let there be abundance of that.

Valere. Trust you to me.

Harpagon. Now, Mr. James, you must go clean my coach.

Mr. James. Hold. This is directed to the coachman. [He puts on his coachman's great-coat.] You say-----

Harpagon. That you must clean my coach, and get my horses ready to drive to the fair with-----

Mr. James. Your horses, Sir? why, they're not in a condition for stirring any where. I won't tell you that they are down on their litter, for the poor beasts have none to lie upon, and it were an improper way of speaking: but you make them keep such austere fasts, that they are nothing but phantoms, or shadows of horses.

Harpagon. They're mighty ill indeed: they do nothing.

Mr. James. And because they do nothing, Sir,

must they eat nothing? It would be much better for them, poor souls, to work a great deal, and eat accordingly. It breaks my very heart to see them grown so thin; for in short, I have such a tender affection for my horses, that, methinks, when I see them suffer, 'tis my own self; not a day passes but I take the meat out of my own mouth to feed them; and 'tis a barbarous temper, Sir, to have no compassion on our neighbour.

Harpagon. It will be no great labour, just to go to the fair.

Mr. James. No, Sir, I han't the heart to drive them, 'twould go against my conscience to give them a lash with the whip in the condition they are. How would you have them drag the coach, when they can't drag themselves along?

Valere. Sir, I'll oblige our neighbour, le Picard, to take upon him to drive them: he'll be of great use to us besides in getting ready the supper.

Mr. James. With all my heart. I'd much rather too they should die under the hand of another, than under mine.

Valere. Mr. James mightily affects being considerate.

Mr. James. Mr. Steward mightily affects being necessary.

Harpagon. Hold your tongue.

Mr. James. Sir, I hate flatterers; and I see that all he does, his perpetual prying into the bread and wine, the wood, the salt and candle, is for nothing but to curry favour with you, and make his court to you. This makes me mad; and I'm griev'd to hear daily what people say of you; for in short, I find I have a great kindness for you, in spite of me;

and, next to my horses, you are the person I love most.

Harpagon. Might I know of you, Mr. James, what is it people say of me?

Mr. James. Yes, Sir, if I were but sure it would not make you angry.

Harpagon. No, not in the least.

Mr. James. Excuse me; I know very well I should put you in a passion.

Harpagon. Not at all; on the contrary it will oblige me; and I'm glad to hear what the world say of me.

Mr. James. Sir, since you will have it, I tell you frankly, that people every where make a jest of you; that they pelt us with a thousand jokes from every quarter, on your account; that nothing pleases them more than to catch you at an advantage, and make stories without end of your sordid tricks: one says, you have almanacs printed on purpose, wherein you double the ember weeks, and vigils, to take advantage of the fasts you oblige your folks to. Another, that you have a quarrel always ready to pick with your servants at quarter-days, or when they leave you, to find a pretence to give them nothing. There, one tells a story, that once upon a time you ordered a cat of one of your neighbours, to be cited coram nobis, for having eat up the remains of a leg of mutton. Here, another, that you were caught one night a stealing, your own self, your horses oats, and that your coachman, who was my predecessor, gave you, in the dark, I don't know how many thwacks of a cudgel, of which you were pleased not to take the least notice of to any body. In short, would you have me speak out? One can go to no place

where one does not hear people play you off: you are the town-talk, the laughing-stock of all the world, and one never hears you spoke of, but under the name of miser, curmudgeon, niggard, and extortioner.

[Harpagon beating him.] You're a numbskul, a villain, a scoundrel, and an impertinent puppy.

Mr. James. Mighty well; did I not guesf how it would be? You would not believe me. I told you plainly that I should put you in a passion by telling you the truth.

Harpagon. Learn then how to speak.

S C E N E VI.

M R. J A M E S, V A L E R E.

V A L E R E laughing.

AS far as I can see, Mr. James, they reward your frankness but scurvily.

Mr. James. 'Sdeath, Mr. Upstart, who affect the man of consequence, what have you to do with it? laugh at your own cudgelling when you get it, and don't come here to laugh at mine.

Valere. Dear Mr. master James, don't put yourself in a passion, I beseech you.

Mr. James aside.] He sneaks; I'll pretend to be valiant, and if he's fool enough to be afraid of me, I'll drub him a little. [Aloud.] Do you know, Mr. Grinner, that I don't laugh myself; and that if you provoke me, I shall make you laugh in another manner.

[Mr. James pushes Valere to the farther end of the stage, threatening him.]

Valere. Softly!

Mr. James. How, softly? suppose I've no mind to't?

Valere. Good Sir!

Mr. James. You're an impertinent fellow.

Valere. Mr. master James.

Mr. James. There's no such person as Mr. master James twice over. If I take a stick to ye, I shall tann your hide, with your importance.

Valere. How, a stick!

[Valere driving him back.

Mr. James. Hey! no. I'm not speaking of that.

Valere. Do you know, Mr. Numscul, that I can tann your hide?

Mr. James. I don't doubt it.

Valere. That when all's done and said, you are nothing but a scrub of a cook?

Mr. James. I know it very well.

Valere. And that you don't know me as yet?

Mr. James. Pardon me.

Valere. You will tann my hide, you said?

Mr. James. It was but in a jest—

Valere. And I've no manner of relish for your jesting. [Cudgels him.] Know that you are but a scurvy joker.

Mr. James alone.] Deuce take sincerity, 'tis a wretched trade. Henceforward I renounce it, and will speak truth no more. Then as to my master, let it pass, he has some right to beat me: but for this Mr. Steward, if it is possible, I'll be revenged on him.

SCENE VII.

FROSINA, MARIANA, MR. JAMES.

FROSINA.

DO you know, Mr. James, whether your master is within?

Mr. James. Yes, he is; faith I know it but too well.

Frosina. Tell him, pray, that we are here.

SCENE VIII.

MARIANA, FROSINA.

MARIANA.

AH! Frosina, what a strange condition am I in! If I must speak what I feel, how terribly am I apprehensive of this interview!

Frosina. But why so? What is it makes you uneasy?

Mariana. Alas! do you ask it? And can't you imagine with yourself the alarms of a person just entering upon a view of the rack on which she is to be fixed?

Frosina. I see plainly that to die agreeably, Harpagon is not the rack you would willingly embrace; and I know by your countenance, that the young spark you were speaking to me of, comes afresh into your head.

Mariana. Yes, Frosina, 'tis what I don't pretend to deny: the respectful visits he paid at our house, have made, I own, some impression on my mind.

Frosina. But have you learn'd who he is?

Mariana. No, I don't know who he is; but I know he is form'd with an air to inspire love; that if matters could be referred to my choice, I should take him before another; and that he contributes not a little to raise in me a horrible dread of the husband you would impose upon me.

Frosina. Lack-a-day, these young sparks are all agreeable enough, and play their part very well; but the generality of them are as poor as rats, and it would suit you much better to take an old man, who'll make you a good settlement. I grant you, that the senses will not find their account quite so well on the side I speak of, and that there are certain disgusts must be endur'd with such a husband; but this is not to last long: and, believe me, his death will soon put you in a condition of taking one more amiable, who will make amends for all.

Mariana. Bless me, Frosina, 'tis a strange affair, when, to be happy, we must wish, or wait for somebody's death; and death will not second all the projects we're pleas'd to set on foot.

Frosina. You joke sure! You are not to marry him but on condition of leaving you very soon a widow; this ought to be one of the articles of the marriage contract. It would be down-right impertinent not to die in three months. But here he comes.

Mariana. Ah! Frosina! what a figure is there!

S C E N E IX.

H A R P A G O N, M A R I A N A, F R O S I N A.

H A R P A G O N to Mariana.

BE not offended, fair one, if I approach you with my spectacles on. I know that your charms strike the eye sufficiently, are visible enough of themselves, and that there is no need of glasses to discover them; but in short, 'tis with glasses we observe the stars; and I do maintain and uphold that you are a star, but a star, the fairest star that shines in heaven.—Frosina, she answers not a word, nor does she discover, as I perceive, the least joy at the sight of me.

Frosina. 'Tis because she is all yet surprize: and then maids are always ashame'd of declaring, at first sight, what they have in their thoughts.

Harpagon. You're right. [to Mariana.] Here is my daughter, pretty dearee, come to wait upon you.

S C E N E X.

H A R P A G O N, E L I Z A, M A R I A N A, F R O S I N A.

M A R I A N A.

I'M of the latest, madam, in acquitting myself of such visit.

Eliza. You've done that, madam, which I ought to have done, and it was my place to have been before-hand with you.

Harpagon. You see what a great girl she is: but ill weeds always sprout up apace.

Mariana aside to Frosina.] O the nauseous fellow!

Harpagon to Frosina.] What says my angel?

Frosina. That she likes you to admiration.

Harpagon. 'Tis too much honour you do me, adorable darling.

Mariana aside.] What a creature!

Harpagon. I'm over-obliged to you for these sentiments.

Mariana aside.] I can hold no longer.

S C E N E XI.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, BRINDAVOINE.

H A R P A G O N.

HERE is my son too, who comes to pay his duty to you.

Mariana aside to Frosina.] Ah! Frosina, what an accident! 'Tis the very person I spoke to you about.

Frosina to Mariana.] The adventure is surprizing.

Harpagon. I see you're astonish'd to see me have children so big: but I shall soon get rid of them both.

Cleanthes to Mariana.] Madam, to tell you the truth, this is an adventure, which I by no means expected; and my father did not a little surprize me, when he told me just now the design he had form'd.

Mariana. I can say the same. 'Tis an accident unforeseen, at which I am as much surprized as you; and I was not prepared for such an adventure.

Cleanthes. It is true, madam, my father could not make a handsomer choice; and that the honour of seeing you is a sensible joy to me; but for all this, I will not assure you that I am glad of the design you have of becoming my mother-in-law. The compliment, I own to you, is too difficult for me, and this is a title, begging your pardon, which I don't wish you. This discourse will appear brutal in the eyes of certain people; but I am assur'd, you are one who will look on it as you should do; a marriage, madam, which you will easily imagine I ought to have an aversion to; and that you are not ignorant, as knowing what I am, how much it clashes with my interest: and that, in short, you are willing I should tell you, with my father's permission, that if things depended upon me, this match should not go forward.

Harpagon. A very impertinent sort of compliment this! What a fine confession to make the lady!

Mariana. And, for myself, in answer, I can tell you things are very even; and that if you should have an aversion to see me your mother-in-law, I should have no less, doubtless, to see you my son-in-law. Don't think, I beseech you, that the giving you this uneasiness is of my seeking. I should be very sorry to occasion you any vexation; and if I don't find myself forc'd by an absolute power, I give you my word, I won't consent to the match which vexes you.

Harpagon. She's in the right on't. A silly compliment must be answered in the same way: I ask your pardon, dearie, for the impertinence of my son; he's a young puppy who don't yet know the consequence of what he says.

Mariana. I give you my word that what he has said to me, has by no means been offensive to me; on the contrary he has done me a pleasure by explaining thus his real sentiments. I like a confession of this kind from him; and had he spoke in another manner, I should have esteem'd him much less.

Harpagon. 'Tis great goodness in you, to be willing thus to excuse his faults. Time will make him wiser, and you will see that he'll alter his sentiments.

Cleanthes. No, Sir, I am not capable of altering them; and I most earnestly desire the lady to believe so.

Harpagon. Do but see what extravagance is here! He persists still stronger:

Cleanthes. Would you have me belie my heart?

Harpagon. Again! have you a mind to change the discourse?

Cleanthes. Well, since you will have me talk in another strain, allow me, madam, to put myself here in the place of my father; and let me protest to you, that I never saw any thing in the world so charming as yourself; that I can conceive nothing equal to the happiness of pleasing you; and that the title of your husband is a glory, a felicity, which I would prefer to the destiny of the greatest princes in the world. Yes, madam, the happiness of possessing you is, to me, the fairest of all fortunes; 'tis what I would fix my whole ambition upon. There is nothing I should not be capable of doing for so valuable a conquest, and the most powerful obstacles.

Harpagon. Softly, son, if you please..

Cleanthes. 'Tis a compliment I make the lady for you.

Harpagon. For me! I've a tongue to explain myself, and have no need of such an interpreter, as you—Here, bring chairs.

Frosina. No, 'twill be better for us to go directly to the fair, that we may be the sooner home, and have the whole time afterwards to entertain ourselves.

Harpagon to Brindavoine.] Put the horses to the coach then.

S C E N E XII.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA.

HARPAGON to Mariana.

I BEG you'll excuse me, sweet-heart, if I have not thought to give you a small collation before you set out.

Cleanthes. I have provided one, father, and have order'd hither some plates of China oranges, citrons, and sweet-meats, which I sent for on your account.

Harpagon aside to Valere.] Valere.

Valere to Harpagon.] He's out of his wits.

Cleanthes. Don't you think this sufficient, father? The lady will please be so good as excuse it.

Mariana. 'Twas not by any means necessary.

Cleanthes. Did you ever see, madam, a diamond more lively than that you see upon my father's finger?

Mariana. Indeed it sparkles very much.

Cleanthes taking the diamond off his father's fin-

ger and giving it to Mariana.] You should look upon it a little nearer.

Mariana. It is a very fine one, indeed; it casts a great lustre.

Cleanthes steps before Mariana, who would give it to him again.] No, madam, 'tis in hands too agreeable. 'Tis a present my father makes you.

Harpagon. If?

Cleanthes. Is it not true, Sir, that you've a mind the lady should keep it for your sake?

Harpagon aside to his son.] How?

Cleanthes. A pretty question indeed! [To Mariana.] He makes signs to me that I should force you to accept it.

Mariana. I would not——

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You are in the wrong; he don't care to take it again.

Harpagon aside.] I shall run mad.

Mariana. 'Twould be——

Cleanthes hindering Mariana from returning it.] No, I tell you, it would affront him.

Mariana. Pray——

Cleanthes. By no means.

Harpagon aside.] Plague take——

Cleanthes. He is perfectly shock'd at your refusal.

Harpagon low to his son.] Ah, villain!

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You see he's beyond all patience.

Harpagon aside to his son, threatening him.] Villain as thou art!

Cleanthes. It is not my fault, father; I do all I can to oblige her to keep it; but she is resolute.

Harpagon aside to his son in a rage.] Scoundrel!

Cleanthes. You are the cause, madam, of my father's quarrelling with me.

Harpagon aside to his son with the same sour look.] Rascal!

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You'll throw him into fits. For goodness sake, madam, accept of it.

Frosina to Mariana.] Lack-a-day! What ceremony is here! Keep the ring, since the gentleman will have it so.

Mariana to Harpagon.] Not to vex you I shall keep it for the present, and shall take another opportunity to restore it.

S C E N E XIII.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, BRINDAVOINE.

BRINDAVOINE.

SIR, here's a man wants to speak with you.

Harpagon. Tell him I'm busy, and bid him come again another time.

Brindavoine. He says he brings you some money.

Harpagon to Mariana.] I beg your pardon. I shall return in a moment.

S C E N E XIV.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, LA MERLUCHE.

LA MERLUCHE comes running, and throws Harpagon down.

SIR—

Harpagon. Oh! I'm murdered!

Cleanthes. What's the matter, father? Have you hurt yourself?

Harpagon. The rascal has certainly been bribed by my debtors to break my neck.

Valere to Harpagon.] There's no harm done—

La Merluche to Harpagon.] Sir, I beg your pardon, I thought I did right to come in haste.

Harpagon. What dost thou come here for, villain?

La Merluche. To tell you that both your horses are without their shoes.

Harpagon. Take them to the smith then quickly.

Cleanthes. While we stay for their shoeing, I'll do the honours of the house, Sir, in your place, and conduct the lady into the garden, whither I shall order the collation to be carry'd.

S C E N E XV.

H A R P A G O N, V A L E R E.

H A R P A G O N.

VALERE, have an eye a little upon all this, and pray take care to save me as much as possible, that we may return it to the people we bought it from.

Valere. A word to the wife.

Harpagon. O rascal of a son! hast thou a mind to ruin me?

A C T I V. S C E N E I.

CLEANTHES, MARIANA, ELIZA, FROSINA.

CLEANTHES.

LET us retire hither, we shall be much better. Here is not one suspicious person now left about us, and we may speak freely.

Eliza. Yes, madam, my brother has disclos'd to me the passion he entertains for you. I know the trouble and vexation such cross accidents as these are capable of producing; and 'tis, I assure you, with an extreme tenderness, that I interest myself in your adventure.

Mariana. It is a soothing consolation, to have such a one as you in one's interest; and I beg of you, madam, ever to cherish this generous friendship for me, so capable of alleviating the rigours of fortune.

Frosina. In troth, you are both of you unlucky mortals, in not having let me into your affairs before all this. I should certainly have warded off this perplexing business, and should not have carried matters so far as they are.

Cleanthes. What would you ha' me do? My evil destiny would have it so. But, fair Mariana, what are your resolutions?

Mariana. Alas! am I in a capacity of making resolutions? and, dependent as I am, can I form any thing but wishes?

Cleanthes. Have I no support in your affections

but bare wishes? no officious pity? no relieving goodness? no active affection?

Mariana. What can I say to you? Put yourself in my place, and think what I can do. Be yourself both counsellor and disposer, I refer myself to you; and I believe you more reasonable than to require any thing of me but what honour and decency will allow of.

Cleanthes. Alas! Whither do you reduce me, to refer you to what the peevish sentiments of a rigorous honour and scrupulous decency will allow?

Mariana. But what would you have me do? Though I could get over several punctilio's to which our sex is obliged, I've a regard for my mother. She has always tenderly brought me up: I can't bring myself to determine upon what will give her any uneasiness. Treat, transact the business with her: employ all your power to gain her over; you may do, and say any thing you please, I give you liberty; and if it only sticks at my declaring in your favour, I readily consent to disclose to her my whole thoughts concerning you.

Cleanthes. Frosina, dear Frosina, would you help us out?

Frosina. In good troth, need you ask it? I'd do't very willingly. You know I am humane enough in my natural disposition. Heaven has not made my heart of brass; I've but too much tenderness of spirit in doing little offices, when I see people love one another in good earnest, and with honour. What could we do in this case?

Cleanthes. Pr'ythee think of it a little.

Mariana. Give us some light.

Eliza. Trump up some invention to unravel what you have done.

Frosina to Mariana.] 'Tis difficult enough. As to your mother, she's not altogether unreasonable, and possibly one might gain her, and make her resolve to transfer to the son the gift she intends for the father. [To Cleanthes,] But the mischief I find in it is, that your father is your father.

Cleanthes. That's true.

Frosina. I mean that he'll bear malice, if we hear that we refuse him, and won't be in humour afterwards to give his consent to your marriage. We should order it by right, that the refusal should come from himself; and endeavour to put him out of conceit with his person.

Cleanthes. You're right.

Frosina. Yes, I am right, that I very well know. That's what should be done: but the deuce and all's to find ways and means—Stay—Suppose we had a woman something elderly, who should have my talents, and should act a part well enough to counterfeit a lady of quality, by the help of a train made up in haste, and a whimsical name of marchioness, or viscountess, let's suppose of Lower-Britany; I should, by my address, work your father into a belief that she was a person very rich, having besides houses, a hundred thousand crowns ready cash; that she was greatly in love with him, and wish'd to be marry'd to him so much, as to make over all he had to him by marriage-contract; why I don't doubt but he would lend an ear to the proposition: or in short, he loves you much, I'm sensible of it; but he loves his money a little more; and when,azzled with this lure, he had once consented to what concerns you, it would signify little if afterwards he should be undeceiv'd when he came to look more narrowly into the effects of our marchioness.

Cleanthes. All this is very well contriv'd.

Frosina. Hold—I just now recollect a certain acquaintance of mine will do our business.

Cleanthes. Depend upon my gratitude, Frosina, if you compass the affair: but, first, my amiable Mariana, let us, I beseech you gain over your mother, and 'tis doing a great deal, only to break off this marriage. I beg you would make all the efforts possible on your part. Make use of all the power which her fondness gives you. Display, without reserve, all those graces of eloquence, those all-powerful charms which heaven has placed in your eyes and lips; and pray forget not any of those tender expressions, those soft intreaties, and those moving caresses, to which I'm persuaded nothing can be refus'd.

Mariana. I'll do all in my power in it, and let nothing slip me.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, MARIANA,
ELIZA, FROSINA.

HARPAGON aside and unperceived.

HEY! my son kisses the hand of his intended mother-in-law and his intended mother in law docs not much decline it. Should there be any mystery in this?

Eliza. There comes my father.

Harpagon. The coach is quite ready; you may set out as soon as you please.

Cleanthes. Since you don't go, I'll conduct them myself

Harpagon. No, stay: they may go very well by themselves; I have occasion for you.

SCENE III.

HARPGON, CLEANTHES.

HARPGON.

WELL, setting aside the consideration of a mother-in-law, what d'ye think of this person?

Cleanthes. What do I think of her?

Harpagon. Yes, of her air, her make, her beauty, her wit?

Cleanthes. So, so.

Harpagon. But speak out.

Cleanthes. To be frank with you, I did not find her what I once thought her. She has quite a coquetish air, is awkwardly made, her beauty very indifferent; and her wit of the commonest kind. Don't think, father, 'tis to put you out of conceit with her: for mother-in-law consider'd as mother-in-law, I like her as well as another.

Harpagon. And yet just now you told her....

Cleanthes. I did say some fine things to her in your name, but 'twas to please you.

Harpagon. So then, you should not have the least inclination for her?

Cleanthes. I? not at all.

Harpagon. I'm sorry for it; for this balks me of a thought which came into my head. I was reflecting, when I saw her here, upon my age; and was thinking with myself that people would find fault with my marrying a young girl. This consideration made me quit the design; and as I

have demanded her in marriage, and am engaged to her by promise, I would have given her you, had you not discover'd such an aversion to her.

Cleanthes. To whom?

Harpagon. To you.

Cleanthes. In marriage?

Harpagon. In marriage.

Cleanthes. Why, 'tis true she's not much to my taste: but to oblige you, father, I'll determine to marry her, if you please.

Harpagon. I? I'm more reasonable than you imagine, I won't force your inclination.

Cleanthes. Excuse me, I'll lay this force upon myself out of respect to you.

Harpagon. No, no; marriage can never be happy where there is no inclination.

Cleanthes. That's a thing, father, which, perhaps, may come afterwards; and they say that love is frequently the fruit of marriage.

Harpagon. No, the affair ought not to be risqu'd on the man's side; and there are vexatious consequences, to which I've no mind to expose you; had you, in proper time, conceiv'd the least inclination for her, I would have made you marry her, in my stead: but as this is not the case, I shall follow my first design, and marry her myself.

Cleanthes. Well, father, since matters are so, I must discover my heart to you; I must let you into this secret of ours. The truth is, I've been in love with her from the day I saw her in the park; my design was of late to have ask'd her of you for a wife, and nothing could have kept me from it, but the declaration of your sentiments, and the fear of displeasing you.

Harpagon. Did you visit her?

Cleanthes. Yes, father.

Harpagon. Frequently?

Cleanthes. Pretty well, for the time.

Harpagon. Was you well received?

Cleanthes. Very well, but without knowing who I was; and that was the reason of Mariana's surprize just now.

Harpagon. Did you declare your passion for her, and the design you had of marrying her?

Cleanthes. Most certainly; and I had even made some faint overtures to her mother.

Harpagon. Did she hearken to your proposals concerning her daughter?

Cleanthes. Yes, very civilly.

Harpagon. And did the daughter sympathize strongly with your passion?

Cleanthes. If I am to believe appearances, I persuade myself, father, that she has some kindness for me.

Harpagon. I'm very glad to have learn'd a secret of this kind; this is exactly what I wanted. Hark'ee me, son, do you know what you've to do? You must think, if you please, of quitting your love; of giving over all pursuits after a person I design for myself; and of marrying, ere long, the person assign'd you.

Cleanthes. How, father, d'ye play upon me in this manner? Well, since matters are come to that, I declare to you, that I will not quit the passion I have for Mariana; and that there is no extremity to which I will not abandon myself, to dispute that conquest with you; and that if you have the consent of a mother on your side, I shall have other succours, perhaps, will fight on mine.

Harpagon. How, villain! have you the assurance to trespass upon my purlieus?

Cleanthes. 'Tis you who trespass upon mine, I have the prior title.

Harpagon. Am I not your father? and don't you owe me respect?

Cleanthes. These are not things in which children should be obliged to pay deference to their fathers; and love knows no body.

Harpagon. I will make you know me with a good cudgel.

Cleanthes. All your threatenings are in vain.

Harpagon. Will you renounce Mariana?

Cleanthes. Upon no account.

Harpagon. A cudgel here immediately.

S C E N E IV.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, MR. JAMES.

MR. JAMES.

HOLD! hold! hold, gentlemen! What's the matter?

Cleanthes. I don't value this a straw.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] Ah! gently, Sir.

Harpagon. To talk thus insolently to me!

Mr. James to Harpagon.] Ah! Sir, for heaven's sake.

Cleanthes. I won't bate you an ace.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] What, to your father?

Harpagon. Let me do it.

Mr. James to Harpagon.] What, to your son? Once more ha' done, for my sake.

Harpagon. I'll make you judge, Mr. James, in this affair, to shew how much I am in the right.

Mr. James. Agreed; [to Cleanthes.] go farther off.

Harpagon. I've a kindness for a girl whom I intend to marry; and this rascal has the impudence to be in love in the same place, and to make his pretensions there notwithstanding my orders.

Mr. James. Ah! he's in the wrong.

Harpagon. Is it not a horrible thing for a son to come in competition with his father? and ought he not, in duty, to abstain from touching upon my inclinations?

Mr. James. You're in the right on't. Let me speak to him, and stay you there.

Cleanthes to Mr. James, who is coming up to him.] Well, yes, since he will choose thee for judge, I don't refuse it; 'tis nothing to me who it is, and I'm willing too, to refer myself to you, Mr. James, concerning our difference.

Mr. James. 'Tis a great honour you do me.

Cleanthes. I am smitten with a young lady, who answers my addresses, and tenderly receives the offer of my heart; and my father takes into his head to disturb our amour, by demanding her for a wife.

Mr. James. Undoubtedly he's in the wrong.

Cleanthes. Is he not ashame'd, at his age, to think of marrying? Does it become him to be amorous again? And ought he not to leave this busines to young fellows?

Mr. James. You're in the right, 'tis a jest in him. Let me speak a little to him. [He returns to Harpagon.] Well, your son is not so strange a creature as you say; he submits to reason. He says he knows the respect he owes you; that he

was only hurried away in the first heat of passion; and that he'll by no means refuse submitting himself to any thing you please, provided you would but treat him better than you do, and give him some person in marriage, with whom he has reason to be satisfied.

Harpagon. Oh! tell him, Mr. James, that upon that condition, he may expect any thing from me; and that, Mariana excepted, I give him the liberty of choosing whom he pleases.

Mr. James. Let me alone. [To Cleanthes.] Well, your father is not so unreasonable as you make him; and he declar'd to me that 'twas your fierceness threw him into a passion; that 'twas your manner of acting put him upon having her; and that he will be ready to grant you all you wish, provided you go about it with mildness, and pay him the deference, respect, and submission that a father ought to expect from a son.

Cleanthes. Ah! Mr. James, you may assure him, that if he grants me Mariana, he shall always find me the most submissive of men; and that I shall never do any thing but according to his pleasure.

Mr. James to Harpagon.] 'Tis done; he consents to what you say.

Harpagon. That's the happiest thing in the world.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] All's over; he's satisfied with your promises.

Cleanthes. Heaven be prais'd.

Mr. James. Gentlemen, you've nothing to do but to discourse the matter over together; here are you now agreed; and you were just at dagger's-drawing, for want of understanding one another.

Cleanthes. My dear Mr. James, I shall be for ever obliged to you.

Mr. James. There's no reason, Sir.

Harpagon. You have done me a pleasure, Mr. James, and it deserves a reward. [Harpagon fumbling in his pocket, Mr. James holds out his hand, but Harpagon only pulls out his handkerchief.] Go, I shall remember you.

Mr. James. I am your humble servant.

S C E N E . V.

H A R P A G O N , C L E A N T H E S .

C L E A N T H E S .

I ASK your pardon, father, for the passion I discovered.

Harpagon. 'Tis nothing at all.

Cleanthes. I assure you it gives me all the concern imaginable.

Harpagon. And it gives me great pleasure to see you brought to reason.

Cleanthes. What goodness is it in you so soon to forget my fault !

Harpagon. When children return to their duty, we presently forget their past faults.

Cleanthes. What, to retain no resentment for all my extravagancies!

Harpagon. 'Tis what you oblige me to by the submission and respect with which you carry yourself.

Cleanthes. I promise you, father, that I shall preserve in my mind the remembrance of your goodness as long as I live.

Harpagon. And I promise you, there's nothing you may not obtain of me.

Cleanthes. Ah! father, I ask nothing more of you, you have given me enough, when you gave me Mariana.

Harpagon. How!

Cleanthes. I say, father, that you have made me too happy, and that I find every thing included in the favour of giving me Mariana.

Harpagon. Who is it talks of giving you Mariana?

Cleanthes. You, father.

Harpagon. I?

Cleanthes. Most certainly.

Harpagon. How, I? 'Tis you promis'd to renounce her.

Cleanthes. I renounce her?

Harpagon. Yes.

Cleanthes. Not at all.

Harpagon. Han't you given up all pretences to her?

Cleanthes. On the contrary, I'm more determin'd than ever.

Harpagon. How, rascal, again?

Cleanthes. Nothing can alter me.

Harpagon. Let me at thee, villain.

Cleanthes. Do what you please.

Harpagon. I forbid thee ever seeing me more.

Cleanthes. Sooner the better.

Harpagon. I abandon thee.

Cleanthes. You're very welcome.

Harpagon. I renounce thee for my son.

Cleanthes. Be it so.

Harpagon. I disinherit thee.

Cleanthes. What you will.

Harpagon. I give thee my curse.

Cleanthes. I've nothing to do with your gifts.

S C E N E VI.

CLEANTHES, LA FLECHE.

LA FLECHE coming out of the garden with a casket.

A H! Sir, I find you in the nick of time. Follow me, quick.

Cleanthes. What's there?

La Fleche. Follow me, I tell you, we're all right.

Cleanthes. How?

La Fleche. Here's your busness.

Cleanthes. What?

La Fleche. I've had a shcep's eye upon it all day.

Cleanthes. What is it?

La Fleche. Your father's treasure, which I've caught.

Cleanthes. In what manner hast thou got it?

La Fleche. You shall know all; let's away, I hear him shouting out,

S C E N E VII.

HARPAGON from the garden, crying:

THIEVES, thieves, murder, assassination. Justice, just heaven! I'm undone, I'm murder'd, they've cut my throat, they've stole my money. Who can this be? What's become of him? Where is he? Where does he conceal himself? What shall I do to find him? Whither run? Whither not run? Is not he there? Is not he here?

Who's there? Stand. Restore me my money, rascal—[To himself, laying hold of his own arm.] Ah! 'tis myself. My mind's disturb'd; and I don't know where I am, who I am, or what I do. Alas! my poor money, my poor money, my dear friend, they have bereav'd me of thee; and since thou art remov'd, I've lost my support, my consolation, my joy; every thing's at an end with me, and I've no more to do in the world: without thee I cannot live. 'Tis over with me, I die, I'm dead, I'm bury'd. Is there no body will raise me to life again, by restoring my dear money, or informing me who has taken it? Heh! what say you? Alas, 'tis no body. Whoever they be that have given the blow, they must have nick'd their opportunity with a great deal of care; they pitch'd upon the exact time when I was in discourse with my rascal of a son. Let's out; I'll go demand justice, and order my whole family to be put to the torture; my maids, my footmen, my son, my daughter, and myself too. What a croud's here got together! I can cast my eyes on no body who gives me not suspicion; every thing seems my thief. Heh! what are they talking of there? Of him that robb'd me? What noise is that above? Is it my thief that's there? For heaven's sake, if you know tidings of my thief, I beseech you tell me. Is he not concealed there amongst you? They all stare at me, and fall a laughing. You'll see that they are certainly concern'd in this robbery committed upon me. Here, quick, commissaries, archers, provosts, judges, racks, gibbets, and executioners. I'll hang every body; and if I find not my money again, I'll hang myself afterwards.



A C T V. S C E N E I.

H A R P A G O N, A C O M M I S S A R Y.

C O M M I S S A R Y.

L E T me alone, thank heaven, I know my busines. 'Tis not to-day that I've been employ'd in thief-catching; and would I had as many thousand crown-bags as I have been the occasion of people being hanged.

Harpagon. All magistrates are interested to take this affair in hand; and if they don't find me out my money, I'll demand justice upon justice itself.

Commissary. We must make the hue and cry as far as is requisite. You say that there was in this casket—

Harpagon. Ten thousand crowns well told.

Commissary. Ten thousand crowns?

Harpagon weeping.] Ten thousand crowns.

Commissary. It is a pretty considerable robbery.

Harpagon. There's no punishment great enough for the enormity of the crime; and if it remains unpunish'd, the most sacred things are no longer secure.

Commissary. In what coin was the sum?

Harpagon. In good Louis-d'ors, and ponderous pistoles.

Commissary. Whom do you suspect of this robbery?

Harpagon. Every body; and I'd have you take into custody the whole city and suburbs.

Commissary. You must not, believe me, scare

people too much; but endeavour to fish out some evidence by fair means, in order to proceed afterwards with more rigour, for the recovery of the sum they have taken from you..

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, COMMISSARY, MR. JAMES.

Mr. JAMES at the end of the stage, turning back to the door he came out of.

I SHALL return presently. Let his throat be cut immediately; let them singe me his feet, let them put him into boiling water, and hang him me up at the cieling.

Harpagon. Who? he that robb'd me?

Mr. James. I speak of a fucking-pig, which your steward has just sent me, and I'll dress him for you after my own fancy.

Harpagon. That's not the question. [Turns to the commissary.] And here's one you are to talk with upon another affair.

Commissary. Don't put yourself in a fright. I'm not a man will scandalize you; and matters shall be carry'd on by fair means.

Mr. James. Is the gentleman to sup with you?

Commissary. In this case, my dear friend, you must hide nothing from your master.

Mr. James. Troth, Sir, I'll shew him all my skill can do; I will treat you in the best manner I possibly can.

Harpagon. That's not the affair..

Mr. James. If I don't make you as good cheer as I would, 'tis the fault of your Mr. Steward, who

has clipped my wings with the scissars of his œconomy.

Harpagon. Rascal, we're about other matters than supper; and I desire thou'lt let me know something of the money they've taken from me.

Mr. James. Have they taken your money?

Harpagon. Yes, rascal; and I'll have thee hanged if thou dost not restore it me.

Commissary to Harpagon.] Pray now don't use him ill. I see, by his looks, he's an honest fellow; and that without being sent to goal he'll discover all you want to know: yes, friend, if you confess the thing to us, no harm shall come to you, and you shall be properly rewarded by your master. They've taken his money from him to-day, and it can't be but you must know some tidings of this affair.

Mr. James aside.] The very thing I wish, to be reveng'd on our steward: since he came within our doors, he's the favourite; no advice heard but his; and besides, the late cudgelling bout sticks on my stomach.

Harpagon. What art thou puzzling about?

Commissary. Let him alone. He's going to satisfy you; I told you that he was an honest fellow.

Mr. James. Sir, if you will have me speak out the real thing, I believe 'tis your dear Mr. Steward who has done the business.

Harpagon. Valere?

Mr. James. Yes.

Harpagon. He who appears to me so faithful?

Mr. James. The very fame. I believe 'tis he that has robbed you.

Harpagon. Upon what grounds do you believe so?

Mr. James. On what grounds?

Harpagon. Yes.

Mr. James. I believe it——because I do believe it:

Commissary. But it is necessary to tell the circumstances you know.

Harpagon. Did you see him hovering about the place where I had put my money?

Mr. James. Yes, indeed. Where was your money?

Harpagon. In the garden.

Mr. James. Exactly; I saw him hovering about the garden. And what was this money in?

Harpagon. In a casket.

Mr. James. The very thing. I saw him have a casket.

Harpagon. And how was this casket made? I shall easily see whether it was mine.

Mr. James. How was it made?

Harpagon. Yes.

Mr. James. It was made——it was made like a casket.

Commissary. That's right. But give some small description of it, that we may see.

Mr. James. 'Tis a large casket.

Harpagon. That they stole from me is a small one.

Mr. James. Why, yes, it is small if you take it in that way; but I call it large for what it contains.

Commissary. And what colour is it?

Mr. James. What colour?

Commissary. Yes.

Mr. James. 'Tis of a colour——'Tis of a certain colour, there——Could you not help me out?

Harpagon. Heh!

Mr. James. Is not it red?

Harpagon. No, gray.

Mr. James. Why, yes, gray-red; that's what I would have said.

Harpagon. There's not the least doubt. 'Tis certainly it. Write, Sir, write down his depositio-
n. Heavens! Whom to trust hereafter! one must never more swear to any thing; and I believe after this, that I may rob myself.

Mr. James to Harpagon.] Here he is come back, Sir. Don't go tell him, however, that 'tis I who have discover'd this.

S C E N E III.

H A R P A G O N, V A L E R E, C O M M I S S A R Y,
M R. J A M E S.

H A R P A G O N.

H ERE, come and confess an action the most villainous, an attempt the most horrible that ever was committed.

Valere. What do ye mean, Sir?

Harpagon. How, traitor, not blush at thy crime?

Valere. Of what crime would you speak?

Harpagon. Of what crime would I speak, raf-
cal, as if you did not know what I would say? 'Tis in vain you pretend to disguise it. The business is out, and they have just now told me all. How could you abuse my kindness in this manner, and introduce yourself into my house on purpose to betray me, to play me such a trick as this?

Valere. Sir, since they have discovered all to you, I won't seek to palliate or deny the thing.

Mr. James. Oh! hoh! how could I guess without thinking of it?

Valere. 'Twas my design to speak to you about it: and I was willing to wait a favourable opportunity: but since 'tis as it is, I conjure you not to ruffle yourself, and to hear my reasons.

Harpagon. And what fine reasons can you give me, infamous thief?

Valere. Nay, Sir, I have not deserve'd such names. 'Tis true, I have committed an offence against you: but, after all, my fault is pardonable.

Harpagon. How pardonable? a premeditated blow! an assassination of this kind!

Valere. For heaven's sake, don't put yourself in a passion. When you have heard me, you'll see the mischief is not so great as you make it.

Harpagon. The mischief not so great as I make it? What! my blood, my bowels, rascal?

Valere. Your blood, Sir, is not fallen into bad hands. - I'm of a rank not to do it injury; there's nothing in all this, but what I can well make reparation for.

Harpagon. So I intend you shall; and that you restore me what you have robb'd me of.

Valere. Your honour, Sir, shall be fully satisfy'd.

Harpagon. Honour's not in the question here. But tell me who mov'd you to this action?

Valere. Alas! do you ask me?

Harpagon. Yes, truly, I do ask you.

Valere. A god who carries his excuse for every thing he does: Love.

Harpagon. Love!

Valere. Yes.

Harpagon. Fine love, fine love, in faith! love of my Louis-d'ors.

Valere. No, Sir, 'tis not your riches have tempted me, 'tis not that has dazzled me; and I protest and vow never to make pretence to any of your wealth, provided you would leave me in the possession of what I have.

Harpagon. I will not do it, a legion take me, if I suffer it; but see what insolence, to desire to keep what he has robb'd me of.

Valere. Do you call this a robbery?

Harpagon. Do I call it a robbery? A treasure such as this?

Valere. 'Tis a treasure, 'tis true, and the most precious one, doubtless, that you have; but to let me have it will not be losing it. Upon my knees I ask it of you, this most charming treasure; and to do right, you must grant it me.

Harpagon. Me grant it! What a deuce does this drive at?

Valere. We have promis'd mutual faith, and have sworn never to forsake each other.

Harpagon. The oath is admirable, and the promise droll.

Valere. We are engag'd to an eternal union.

Harpagon. I shall forbid the banns, I assure you.

Valere. Nothing but death can separate us.

Harpagon. This is being devilishly bewitched with my money.

Valere. I have told you already, Sir, 'twas not interest that carried me to do what I have done. My heart has not acted by such springs as you imagine, and a motive more noble has inspired me with his resolution.

Harpagon. You'll see 'tis out of Christian charity he would have my money: but I'll give effec-

gual orders here; and justice, impudent hang-dog, will do me right for all.

Valere. You may use me as you will, and here I am ready to suffer all the violence you please; but I beg of you, at least to believe, that if there is any harm, 'tis only me you are to accuse; and that your daughter is not, in the least, to blame in all this.

Harpagon. I much believe it truly. It would be very strange had my daughter been an accomplice in such a crime. But I expect to have my treasure again, and that you confess whither you have carry'd it.

Valere. I? I have not carry'd it away, 'tis still at home.

Harpagon aside.] Oh my dear casket! [aloud.] Is't not gone out of my houfe?

Valere. No, Sir.

Harpagon. Heh! but hast thou not been dabbling?

Valere. I dabbling? Ah! you wrong us both; the flame with which I burn is too pure, too full of respect to admit of that.

Harpagon aside.] Burn for my casket!

Valere. I would much rather have died, than have discover'd the least offensive thought; there was too much wisdom, too much honesty for that.

Harpagon aside.] My casket too honest!

Valere. All my desires were limited to the pleasure of sight; and nothing criminal has profan'd the passion those fair eyes have inspir'd me with.

Harpagon aside.] The fair eyes of my casket! He speaks of it as a lover of his mistress.

Valere. Dame Claudia, Sir, knows the whole truth of this adventure, and she can bear witness..

Harpagon. How! my maid an accomplice in the affair?

Valere. Yes, Sir, she was witness of our engagement; and it was after she knew my passion was honourable that she assisted me in persuading your daughter to plight her troth, and receive mine.

Harpagon aside.] Hey! what, does the fear of justice make him rave? [To Valere.] What dost thou perplex us with about my daughter?

Valere. I say, Sir, that I had the greatest difficulty to bring her modesty to consent to what my love requir'd.

Harpagon. The modesty of whom?

Valere. Of your daughter; and it was only since yesterday she could prevail upon herself to resolve we should mutually sign a promise of marriage.

Harpagon. Has my daughter sign'd thee a promise of marriage?

Valere. Yes, Sir, as on my part I have sign'd one to her.

Harpagon. O heavens! Misfortune upon misfortune!

Mr. James to the commissary.] Write, Sir, write.

Harpagon. Complication of mischief! Excess of despair! [To the commissary.] Come, Sir, do the duty of your office, and draw me up an indictment for him as a felon and a suborner.

Mr. James. As a felon and a suborner.

Valere. These are names that don't belong to me; and when you know who I am——

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON, ELIZA, MARIANA, VALERE, FROSINA, MR. JAMES, A COMMISSARY.

HARPAGON.

AH! graceless child! daughter unworthy of such a father! Is it thus you put in practice the lessons I've given you? Do you suffer yourself to be caught by an infamous thief, and engage yourself to him without my consent? But you shall be deceiv'd, both of you. [to Eliza.] Four strong walls shall answer for your conduct; [to Valere.] and a good gallows, impudent rascal, shall do me justice for thy boldness.

Valere. It will not be your passion will judge the affair: and they'll hear me, at least, before they condemn me.

Harpagon. I was wrong to say the gallows, thou shalt be broke upon the wheel.

Eliza kneeling to her father.] Ah! father, be a little more humane in your sentiments, I beseech you, don't go to push matters with the utmost violence of paternal power. Suffer not yourself to be carry'd away by the first gusts of your passion; and give yourself time to consider what you do. Take the trouble of looking more narrowly into the person you're so enrag'd at. He's quite another man than you imagine; and you shall find it less strange I should have given myself to him, when you know that had it not been for him you would have long ago have lost me for ever. Yes, father, 'tis he who sav'd me from the great hazard which

you know I ran in the water; and to whom you owe the life of that very daughter, who—

Harpagon. All this is nothing; and it had been much better for me, had he suffered thee to drown, than to do what he has done.

Eliza. I conjure you, Sir, by paternal love, grant me—

Harpagon. No, no; I'll hear nothing; and justice must do its office.

Mr. James aside.] You'll pay me the blows of the cudgel.

Frosina aside.] What strange perplexity is here!

S C E N E V.

ANSELM, HARPGON, ELIZA,
MARIANA, FROSINA, VALERE,
COMMISSARY, M.R. JAMES.

ANSELM.

WHAT's the matter here, Signior Harpagon? You are very much ruffled, I see.

Harpagon. Ah! Signior Anselm, I am one of the most miserable of men; and here the Lord knows what vexation and disorder in respect to the contract you come to sign; I'm assassinated in my fortune, I'm assassinated in my honour; and there's a traitor, a villain, who has violated all the most sacred ties; who has crept into my family under the title of a menial servant, to rob me of my money, and seduce my daughter.

Valere. Who minds your money, that you make such a senseless pother about?

Harpagon. Yes, they've made each other a promise of marriage. This affront concerns you, Sig-

nior Anselm; and 'tis you who ought to take party against him, and prosecute him to the utmost at your own expence, to revenge yourself on his insolence.

Anselm. It is not my design to force myself upon any body, or to make any pretences to a heart which has already bestow'd itself: but as to your interests, I'm ready to espouse them as if they were my own.

Harpagon. There's a gentleman that's a very honest commissary, who tells me he'll omit nothing which concerns the duty of his office. [To the commissary, pointing to Valere.] Charge him, Sir, as you should do, and make things very criminal.

Valere. I don't see what crime you can make of the passion I have for your daughter; and the punishment to which you think I may be condemned on account of our engagement, when 'tis known who I am—

Harpagon. I don't in the least value all these stories; and the world now-a-days is full of nothing but your rascally quality, your impostors, who make advantage of their obscurity, who trick themselves insolently out, with the first illustrious name that comes into their head.

Valere. Know that I have a heart too honest, to take upon me any thing which does not belong to me; and all Naples can bear witness of my birth.

Anselm. Soft and fair, take care what you are going to say. You run more risque here than you are aware of. You speak before a person to whom all Naples is known, and who can easily see through your story.

Valere. I'm not a man should fear any thing;

If you know Naples, you know who Don Thomas d'Alburcy was.

Anselm. Doubtless I know him, and few people knew him better than I.

Harpagon. I care not either for Don Thomas, or for Don Martin. [Seeing two candles burning, he blows out one.]

Anselm. Pray let him speak; we shall see what we'll say of him.

Valere. I would say, that he's the person who gave me birth.

Anselm. He?

Valere. Yes.

Anselm. Go, you jest; find some other story that may succeed better for you; and don't pretend to save yourself under this piece of imposture.

Valere. Pray express yourself with more decency. It is no imposture; and I advance nothing here, which it would not be easy for me to justify.

Anselm. How! dare you call yourself the son of Don Thomas d'Alburcy?

Valere. Yes, I dare; and I am ready to maintain this truth against any person whatsoever.

Anselm. It is a wonderful assurance. Know your confusion, that it is sixteen years ago at least, that the person you mention was lost at sea with his wife and children, endeavouring to save their lives from the cruel persecutions which accompany'd the troubles at Naples, and which occasion'd the banishment of several illustrious families.

Valere. Yes: but know to your confusion, that is son, seven years of age, with a servant, was saved from that shipwreck by a Spanish vessel; and

that this son sav'd is the person who speaks to you. Know that the captain of this vessel, being affected with my misfortune, took a kindness to me; that he brought me up as his own son; and that arms have been my employment, ever since I was capable of them: that I have learn'd of late that my father was not dead, as I had always believ'd; that passing this way, to go in search of him, an adventure, concerted by heaven, brought me to the sight of the amiable Eliza; that this sight made me slave to her beauty; and that the violence of my love, and the severities of her father, made me take a resolution to introduce myself into his house, and send another person in quest of my parents.

Anselm. But what testimony, other than your own word, may assure us that this is not a fable built upon a truth?

Valere. The Spanish captain; a ruby seal which belong'd to my father; a bracelet of agate which my mother put upon my arm; and old Pedro, the servant who was saved with me from the shipwreck.

Mariana. Alas! I myself can answer here for what you've said, that you do not impose upon us; and every thing you say gives me clearly to know that you are my brother.

Valere. You my sister?

Mariana. Yes, my heart was touch'd from the moment you open'd your mouth; and our mother, who will be overjoy'd at the sight of you, has a thousand times entertain'd me with the misfortunes of our family. Heaven too suffer'd not us to perish in that melancholy shipwreck; but it only sav'd our lives at the expence of our liberty; and they

were Corsairs who took up my mother and myself from the wreck of our vessel. After ten years of slavery, a lucky accident gave us our liberty, and we return'd to Naples, where we found all our effects sold, without being able to hear the least news of our father. We took passage for Genoa, whither my mother went to pick up the unhappy remains of a family-estate that had been torn to pieces; and from thence flying from the barbarous injustice of her relations, she came into these parts, where she has scarce liv'd any other than a languishing life.

Anselm. Oh! heaven! how great are the strokes of thy power! and how well dost thou let us see, that it belongs to thee alone to work miracles! Embrace me, my children, and mix your transports with those of your father.

Valere. Are you our father?

Mariana. Is it you my mother has so much lamented?

Anselm. Yes, my daughter, yes, my son, I am Don Thomas d'Alburcy, whom heaven sav'd from the waves, with all the money he had with him; and who having thought you all dead for more than sixteen years, was preparing, after long voyages, to seek for the consolation of a new family, in marrying some mild-tempered and discreet person. The little security I saw for my life in returning to Naples, made me lay aside all thoughts of ever returning to it; and having found means to sell all I had there, I have settled myself here, where, under the name of Anselm, I endeavoured to get rid of all the vexations of that other name, which had occasion'd me so many crosses.

Harpagon to Anselm.] Is that your son?

Anselm. Yes.

Harpagon. I shall make you pay me the ten thousand crowns he has robb'd me of.

Anselm. He robb'd you!

Harpagon. The very same.

Valere. Who told you so?

Harpagon. Mr. James.

Valere. Didst thou tell him so?

Mr. James. You see that I say nothing.

Harpagon. Yes. There's Mr. Commissary who has taken his deposition.

Valere. Can you think me capable of so base an action?

Harpagon. Capable, or not capable, I'll have my money again.

SCENE THE LAST.

HARPAGON, ANSELM, ELIZA, MARIANA,
CLEANTHES, VALERE, FROSINA, COM-
MISSARY, MR. JAMES, LAFLECHE.

CLEANTHES.

Torment not yourself, my father, accuse nobody. I've had news of your affair; and I come here to tell you, that if you will but resolve to let me marry Mariana, your money shall be restor'd you.

Harpagon. Where is it?

Cleanthes. Don't give yourself the least trouble. 'Tis in a place I'm answerable for; and all depends upon me alone. You are to tell me what you determine upon; and you have your choice, either to give me up Mariana, or lose your casket.

Harpagon. Have they took nothing out of it?

Cleanthes. Nothing at all. Consider whether you design to subscribe to this marriage, and join your consent to that of her mother, who leaves her the liberty of choice betwixt us two.

Mariana to Cleanthes.] But you don't consider that this consent alone is not sufficient; and that heaven, with a brother, as you see, [pointing to Valere.] has restor'd me a father, [pointing to Anselm.] from whom you are to obtain me.

Anselm. Heaven, my children, has not restor'd me to you, to oppose your desires. Signior Harpagon, you know very well that the choice of a young person will fall upon the son, sooner than upon the father. Come, don't oblige people to say what's unnecessary for us to hear, and consent, as I do, to this double marriage.

Harpagon. To be well advis'd, I must see my casket.

Cleanthes. You shall see it safe and sound.

Harpagon. I am not able to give my children any money in marriage.

Anselm. Well, I have some for them, let not that disquiet you.

Harpagon. You'll oblige yourself to defray the whole expence of these two marriages?

Anselm. Yes, I do oblige myself to it. Are you satisfy'd?

Harpagon. Yes, provided you will order me a suit of clothes for the nuptials.

Anselm. Agreed. Come let's enjoy the mirth this happy day presents us with.

Commissary. Hold, gentlemen, hold, softly, if you please. Who pays me for my writings?

Harpagon. We have nothing to do with your writings.

Commissary. Indeed! But I shan't pretend to make them for nothing, not I.

Harpagon pointing to Mr. James.] There's a fellow I'll give you to hang for your payment.

Mr. James. Alas! What must one do then? They cudgel me when I speak truth; and they would hang me for lying.

Anselm. Signior Harpagon, you must forgive him this piece of imposture.

Harpagon. You'll pay the commissary then.

Anselm. Yes, I will. Let us go immediately, and share our joy with your mother.

Harpagon. And I, to see my dear casket once more.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



